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THE

PRIVATE LIFE OF NAPOLEON

THE PRIVATE LIFE

OF

NAPOLEON

BY

ARTHUR LEVY

From the French

BY

STEPHEN LOUIS SIMEON

TRANSLATOR OF 'THE YOUTH OF FREDERICK THE GREAT,' ETC.





IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1894



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BOOK I.

EARLY LIFE

THE

PRIVATE LIFE OF NAPOLEON

I.

First Impressions—Order—Economy—The Hero as Legislator—Slender Means at Home—Departure from Ajaccio—Bonaparte or Buonaparte?

On August 15, 1769, about eleven o'clock in the morning,[1] Napoleon Bonaparte, son of Charles Bonaparte and Letitia Ramolino, was born at Ajaccio.

His mother was in church when she felt the first symptoms of pain, and returning home hastily, the child was born upon the carpet. Was any allegory represented upon that carpet? Was it one of those old-fashioned carpets with large figures on it?[2] No matter; we may leave that to lovers of the legendary. What concerns us are the surroundings of the newly-born child.

[1] Nasica, 'Mémoires sur l'Enfance et la Jeunesse de Bonaparte,' p. 53.

[2] Stendhal, 'Vie de Napoléon,' p. 10.

His father, Charles Bonaparte, was of a noble family originating in Tuscany. From ancient documents, of more or less authenticity, it appears that Bonapartes once reigned at Treviso. Napoleon always cared very little about this royal genealogy, which, however, seemed to have given great pleasure to his father-in-law, the Emperor of Austria, who said on one occasion: 'I would not give him my daughter were I not convinced that his family is as old and as good as my own.'[3]

'Napoleon's mother was Letitia Ramolino, daughter of one Pietra Santa, who, as the widow of Ramolino, married as her second husband a Swiss named Fesch, whose family were well known and honourably established at Basle as bankers.'[4]

Napoleon's mother, therefore, passed the years before her marriage in commercial surroundings. At the age when most girls are thinking of marriage, she was studying order, economy, and careful management;[5] and if, as philosophers have thought, a man's character comes to him from his mother, we might find in this fact the root of those instincts of honesty, of excessive

[3] M. Foissy, 'La Famille Bonaparte depuis 1264,' p. 5.

[4] Miot de Melito, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., pp. 30, 31; J. B. Salgues, 'Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de France,' t. i., p. 189, Paris, 1814.

[5] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 66.

carefulness in all matters in which money plays a part, which is one of the most characteristic features of Napoleon.

If we seek for the first impressions that must have struck the imagination of Napoleon in childhood, we shall find two of very different kinds:

First, the patriotic stories of recent events in Corsican history. In all these stories the merits of Paoli were made a proud boast. Paoli, as General-in-chief at the age of barely twenty-nine, defeated several times, with an army deprived of everything, the Genoese, who were much more numerous and well organized. To the prestige given by victory, he added another equally valuable, being no less distinguished as an administrator and politician than as a soldier. This type of hero and legislator left a profound trace on Napoleon's mind, who often spoke of it with enthusiasm in his early writings, long after he was acquainted with Paoli, with whom his relations terminated in a violent quarrel, to which we shall refer later on.

The other impression that Napoleon received in his earliest youth was that of seeing his mother afflicted, but calm and energetic, amid the ruins produced by the recent wars.

The domestic life of this family, already poor, and increasing annually, was conducted on a very

humble scale. Charles Bonaparte's whole fortune consisted of a small property worth from 1,000 to 1,500 francs (£40 to £60) a year.[6]

When in 1776 Corsica was at length tranquillized, it was necessary to think about settling the children in life. The situation was precarious; the family expenses were heavy, and, moreover, they had to keep up some appearances, as Charles Bonaparte was assessor to the Junta and member of the Committee of Twelve appointed to watch over the administration of Corsica.

In 1778 Napoleon, at nine years of age, was accustomed to hear daily discussions between his father—a gentle, easy-going, careless man—and his mother, who was careful to excess, 'economical even to parsimony,'[7] preoccupied above all with her children's future. Letitia remained the same through life. When her son became Emperor, he reproached her on one occasion with not spending all the money she received. She replied, alluding to Jerôme and Lucien: 'I am saving for those of my children who are not yet settled.'[8]

The discussions between husband and wife terminated eventually in the sale of a field, a very painful sacrifice for a Corsican.[9] Then they

[6] Pelet de la Lozère, 'Opinions de Napoléon au Conseil d'Etat,' p. 19.

[7] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' p. 76.

[8] Mdlle. Avrillon, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 40.

[9] Stendhal, 'Vie de Napoléon,' p. 18.

began to make use of all the influence they could command, in order to gain scholarships for the education of the two eldest—Joseph and Napoleon. Their prayers were granted, thanks to the intervention of Monsieur de Marbœuf, Bishop of Autun, nephew of the Governor of Corsica. Joseph was to take orders, and to be placed at the college of Autun ; Napoleon, intended for the navy, was to go to the school at Brienne, having previously gone through a course at Autun, so as to learn sufficient French to be able to follow the lectures.

They started on December 15, 1778. It was a great event for the family. The children were leaving their mother for the first time.[10] One can imagine all that she said to her dear ones, her advice full of the tenderest affection and the severest common-sense. All the family assembled at the quay : Uncle Lucien, Archdeacon of Ajaccio ; the old servant Manuccia, whom the children always called 'Aunt' ; Ilaria and Saveria, their nurses, the latter of whom always continued to address the great Emperor as 'thou,' as she had done in the days of his sickly childhood. Their eyes were dimmed with tears as the children waved their last kisses from the deck of the ship.

After a halt at Florence to procure the papers

[10] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien,' t. i., p. 16.

showing nobility[11] necessary to Napoleon for the school at Brienne, they reached Autun on December 30, 1778, and the boys entered the college in the evening of January 1, 1779.[12]

Then the father went to Versailles, where he was to arrange for the admission of Napoleon to Brienne. For this purpose he sent all the proofs collected in Florence to Monsieur d'Hozier de Sérigny, herald (*juge d'armes*) of the French nobility.

Monsieur d'Hozier sent a form of interrogation to Monsieur Bonaparte, whence we take the following questions, which show with what minuteness the herald carried out his duties:

'Paris, 8 March, 1779. '*To Monsieur de Buonaparte, deputy of nobility of Corsica, care of Monsieur Ralte, Rue Saint Médéric, Versailles.*	'CHARLES BONAPARTE'S ANSWERS.
'What is your wife's family name? She is called Marie Lætitia Zémolina. . . . Is this third name a family name, or was it given her in baptism? What is the first letter of this name? Can it be translated into French?	'My wife's family name is Ramolino, and it is hardly possible to translate it into French.
'Your baptismal register	'It is true that my names

[11] De Coston, 'Les Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 17.

[12] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., p. 68.

names you Carlo Mia. This last name is, in all probability, an abbreviation of Maria, but in all other deeds you are simply called Charles.

are Charles Mary, but I have never made use of any save that of Charles.

'Your name appears constantly in various deeds, even in the patent of nobility of 1771, without the prefix "de," yet you sign your name De Buonaparte?

'The Republic of Genoa, about two hundred years ago, bestowed upon my ancestor, Jerome, the title of "Egregium Hieronimum" de Buonaparte. The prefix was omitted, as it is not customary to use it in Italian.

'The said patent of nobility of 1771 gives to your family the name of De Bonaparte and not Buonaparte: am I not right in conforming to the orthography of the said patent?

'The correct spelling of my family name is De Buonaparte.

'Finally, how should I translate into French the Christian name of your son, which is Napoleone in Italian?

'The name Napoleone is Italian.

'I have the honour to be,' etc.

'I have the honour to be,' etc.

It may be observed in passing that, in calling himself later on Bonaparte instead of Buonaparte, Napoleon was simply returning to a spelling long in vogue in his family, and under which his family had been ennobled.

Although the scrupulous herald failed to translate Italian proper names into French, he declared that 'young Napoleon Bonaparte possessed the

nobility necessary for admission into the ranks of the gentlemen who are educated by his Majesty in the royal schools.'[13]

While awaiting this decision, Charles had addressed a petition to the King, with the object of gaining an indemnity of 2,000 francs (£80), which was granted. Armed with this sum, and with all his papers in order, Charles Bonaparte went to Brienne on April 20, where he was joined on the 23rd by Napoleon, who came from Autun. That same day he joined the school.[14]

In three months at Autun, Napoleon 'had learned sufficient French to enable him to converse easily, and to write small essays and translations.'[15]

[13] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., p. 75; De Coston, t. i., p. 21.

[14] Jung, De Coston, etc.

[15] Letter from the Abbé Chardon, professor at Autun, to the Abbé Forien, quoted by Jung and De Coston.

II.

At Brienne—A Child in Exile—Bullying—Pleasant Recollections of School—How the Emperor looked after his Former Masters.

Every historian, according as he has taken upon himself the character of apologist or detractor, has represented Napoleon, during his school-days at Brienne,[1] either as a prodigy, showing universal genius, or as an obstinate and underhand child, foreshadowing the ferocious despot.

[1] 'When Napoleon was at school at Brienne, the son of an English peer, who himself became Lord Wenlock, was his schoolfellow. One day the little Corsican came to young Lawley, and said, "Look at this." He showed him a letter written in remarkably good English: it was addressed to the British Admiralty, and requested permission to enter our Navy. The young Bonaparte said, "The difficulty, I am afraid, will be my religion." Lawley said, "You young rascal! I don't believe that you have any religion at all." Napoleon replied, "But my family have; my mother's race, the Ramolini, are very rigid. I should be disinherited if I showed any signs of becoming a heretic." These facts I had from one who had a very good means of knowing. He told me that Bonaparte's letter was sent, and that it still exists in the archives of the Admiralty.'—Sir William Fraser, '*Hic et Ubique*,' p. 6.

Whichever view be taken, it is a good deal to seek for in a boy not yet ten years of age. We are rather inclined to think with Chateaubriand that 'he was a little boy neither more nor less distinguished than his fellows.'[2] Distrustful of himself in the use of a language learned during three months at Autun, arriving from a country which had only been French for ten years—and a country, moreover, which had, and still has, a special fame for her manners—the little boy naturally appeared strange to his comrades, and displayed reserve towards those whom he knew to be superior to himself in rank and fortune. The Emperor one day said to Caulaincourt in 1811:

'At Brienne I was the poorest of all my schoolfellows. They always had money in their pockets; I never. I was proud, and was most careful that nobody should perceive this. . . . I could neither laugh nor amuse myself like the others. Bonaparte the schoolboy was out of touch with his comrades, and he was not popular.'[3]

Napoleon thus exiled, necessarily alone, had to bear all the witticisms of the other pupils. He was called 'the Corsican,' and nicknamed 'Paille-au-nez,'[4] a variant of the Corsican pronunciation

[2] Chateaubriand, 'Mémoires d'Outre-tombe,' t. ii., p. 17.

[3] Second part of the 'Souvenirs du Duc de Vicence,' t. ii., p. 192; 'Napoléon en Belgique et Hollande,' by Chev. de Sorr.

[4] Bourrienne, De Ségur, D'Abrantès, etc., *passim*.

of his christian name *Napoleone*. No doubt the child was embittered, and it is more than likely that he occasionally retaliated with blows. The schoolboy, however, showed that he was equal to the rest of his comrades as soon as he found a companion who displayed some liking for him.

'As for you,' he said to Bourrienne, 'you never laugh at me; you like me.'[5]

What did he mean when he pronounced the words: 'I will do your French people all the harm I can'?[6] This phrase has been recently reproduced by a very eminent philosopher, Monsieur Taine,[7] who has made it the basis of a programme which, to say the least, is premature. Bourrienne himself, who, at the moment of writing his memoirs, had personal reasons for not vaunting the gentleness of Napoleon's character, contents himself with relegating this speech to the time when the young Corsican 'was rendered bitter by the mockery of his schoolmates.'[8]

Did he intend to show that he did not consider himself a Frenchman? No; it was a mere childish outburst. The others called him Corsican; he called them Frenchmen. It was petulance, and nothing more, for hatred was not

[5] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 66.

[6] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 33.

[7] H. Taine, 'Origines de la France Contemporaine,' 'Le Régime Moderne,' t. i., p. 40.

[8] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 33.

deep-rooted in Napoleon, who, victim as he was of all sorts of bullying, 'preferred going to prison himself to denouncing his comrades who had done wrong'[9] on days when, being on duty, he was charged with some special supervision.

Such conduct towards those of whom he was the daily butt resembles, if a comparison or a prognostication be needed, rather the chivalry of France than the vengeance of Corsica.

Amidst all the miseries he endured, he continued studious, and always obtained good marks, especially in mathematics.

Outside his studies all his interests were centred in his parents, whom he desired to help in the establishment of the numerous family at Ajaccio. In 1783, Joseph decided against the ecclesiastical life, and a decision between Metz and Brienne had to be taken. Napoleon, although scarcely thirteen years old, writes thus to his father: 'Joseph can come here, because Father Patrault, my mathematical master, whom you know, is not going to leave. I am desired, therefore, by the headmaster, to assure you that he will be very well received here, and that he may come in absolute security. Father Patrault is an excellent teacher of mathematics, and has specially told me that he will undertake my brother with pleasure, and that if he will but work we may go up

[9] Bourrienne, t. i., p. 35; De Ségur, t. i., p. 89.

together for the artillery examination. You need take no steps on my behalf, as I am simply a student, but you will have to do something for Joseph. As, however, you have a letter for him, there is nothing more to be done. Good-bye, my dear father; I hope that you will prefer to send him to Brienne rather than to Metz for several reasons. First, because it will be a pleasure to Joseph, Lucien, and myself. . . . As my brother knows nothing of mathematics, they would put him down among the children at Metz, which would disgust him. . . . Therefore I trust that before the end of October I shall embrace Joseph.'[10]

That is not the letter of a boy with a cross, sulky disposition. Do not these steps taken to save his parents trouble, his interviews with the headmaster, with his own tutor, this esteem for his masters, come rather from a good pupil, who is above the petty persecutions of the playground, and do not they prove a filial and fraternal devotion most praiseworthy in a child of that age?

It seems to be frequently forgotten that Napoleon remained five years and a half at Brienne (April, 1779, to September, 1784). After the first difficulties with his companions, he probably settled down, and took his part in their daily

[10] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien,' t. i., p. 22; De Coston, 'Les Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 44.

life. However far one follows the Emperor's career, it will never be found that his sojourn at Brienne was a disagreeable memory to him, or that it was a place in which he had suffered, and of which the recollection was odious. Quite the contrary.

As the First Consul was one day walking with Bourrienne in the gardens of Malmaison, he heard the chiming of some bells, which always had a remarkable effect upon him. He stopped, listened delightedly, and said in a broken voice:

'That reminds me of my first years at Brienne; I was happy then!'[11]

On April 3, 1805, the Emperor stopped at Brienne, visited the old school, which had fallen into ruins, and pointed out to his suite where the class-rooms, dormitories, and refectory had been. A priest, one of the old tutors, was presented to him, and he talked to him familiarly for twenty minutes.[12]

Throughout his life he sought after those who had known him in his early days, and in the first rank of these we must place Bourrienne, the friend and confidential secretary of the Emperor. We shall find frequent mentions of this early friend. Then came Lauriston, his fellow-student,[13]

[11] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 22.
[12] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 140.
[13] Meneval, 'Souvenirs,' t. i., p. 52.

afterwards General, and the last Ambassador sent by Napoleon to St. Petersburg. The Minor Brothers of the Order of St. Benedict were Napoleon's instructors; Father Louis was head-master of the school when, in 1786, his pupil, then a lieutenant of artillery, sent him his history of Corsica, begging him to pass an opinion upon the work.[14] The second master, Father Dupuis, retired to Laon in 1789, and continued to advise Napoleon,[15] and we shall afterwards find Dupuis installed as librarian at Malmaison.[16] The First Consul frequently visited him, and treated him with the utmost attention and respect.[17] On receiving the news of the death of his old master in 1807, the Emperor wrote from Osterode to the Empress: 'Tell me about the death of poor Dupuis; let his brother know that I intend to look after him.'[18]

Father Charles, the chaplain, who prepared the boy for his first Communion, was never forgotten. In 1790 Napoleon, then a Lieutenant in the artillery at Auxonne, never failed to visit Father Charles each time he went to Dôle. Later on,

[14] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., pp. 97-120.

[15] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 81.

[16] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., p. 82.

[17] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 103.

[18] 'Letters from Napoleon to Joséphine,' t. i., p. 291, Osterode, March 17, 10 at night.

as he passed through this town on his way to take up the command of the Army of Italy, General Bonaparte would have regarded it as a dereliction of duty not to have sent for the worthy priest to come and shake his hand at the post-house. The First Consul never forgot the school chaplain, and sent him a pension of 1,000 francs with an autograph letter, in which he says: 'I can never forget that to your virtuous example and wise lessons I am indebted for the great fortune that has come to me. Without religion no happiness, no future, is possible. Remember me in your prayers.'[19]

Father Berton was appointed rector of the School of Fine Arts at Compiègne by the First Consul.[20] Napoleon met an old schoolfellow named Bouquet in Italy, and gave him the post of Commissary-General. This Bouquet was destined to a bad end. He pillaged the 'mont-de-piété'[21] at Verona, was arrested, and imprisoned. He succeeded in making his escape, which delighted Bonaparte, who was overjoyed at not having to punish an old schoolfellow.[22]

Those who have seen his letters will learn with surprise that he had a writing-master at Brienne,

[19] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 30.

[20] Bourrienne, t. v., p. 197.

[21] State pawnbroker's.—*Translator.*

[22] Bourrienne, p. 353.

and on one occasion when old Dupré—such was his name—came to St. Cloud, and reminded the Emperor that 'for fifteen months he had had the pleasure of giving him lessons in writing at Brienne,' Napoleon could not help exclaiming to the poor man, who was quite aghast: 'And a fine sort of pupil you had! I congratulate you!'[23] After a few kindly words, he dismissed Dupré, who received a few days later a notification of a pension of 1,200 francs (£48).[24]

Father Patrault, his mathematical master, lived with Napoleon in 1795, and became one of his secretaries with the Army of Italy.[25] Even the porter of Brienne, Hauté and his wife, became porter at Malmaison, where they finished their days.

These witnesses to his stay at Brienne, sought out as they were at every stage of his career as Lieutenant, General, First Consul, and Emperor, refute better than any other arguments could the stories of his moroseness at Brienne. Napoleon forgot nothing connected with that period; he even remembered that Madame de Montesson had placed upon his brow the first crown he ever gained at school. He summoned her to the

[23] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 103.

[24] *Ibid.*, and De Coston, t. i., p. 31.

[25] De Coston, t. i., p. 377; Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 81.

Tuileries, and caused her property, which had been confiscated, to be restored to her.[26]

This sketch of facts relative to Brienne leaves intact the character of the child, faithful to his mother's warnings, ever mindful of the cares of the large family at Ajaccio, diligent in his studies, esteemed by his masters, and, what is still more, esteeming them.

After he had passed his examination, on September 15, 1783, the Chevalier de Kéralio, Major-General and Sub-Inspector of the Royal Military Schools of France, thought the following note sufficient to sum up Napoleon: 'He will make a capital sailor. Deserves to pass into the School of Paris.'[27]

Napoleon was not accepted for the navy. Vacancies were scarce, and they were much sought after by pupils with high recommendations and interest. He was consequently kept at school, but his duty to his family compelled him to leave Brienne, and to give up his scholarship to his brother Lucien, as two brothers could not be on the foundation at the same time. Napoleon, renouncing the navy with regret, wrote to his father to obtain for him a commission in either the artillery or the engineers.[28]

26 De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 43.

27 Bourrienne, t. i., p. 38.

28 Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., p. 103.

III.

The Military School at Paris—The Foundation-scholar and his Rich Comrades—How the Rule invented in 1784 was applied in 1808—Kindness of Napoleon to the Professors of the Military School—Sub-lieutenant—He excites the Hilarity of his Friends.

On September 1, 1784, Napoleon was nominated to a King's scholarship at the Military School in Paris; and on October 17 he started for Paris, arriving the 19th.[1]

He did not arrive in the guise of the future conqueror of the world.

He looked like a newcomer; he gaped at everything he saw, and stared about him. His appearance was that of a man whom any scoundrel would try to rob after seeing him.[2] Such is the description given of him by Demetrius Comneno, his Corsican compatriot, who met him as he was getting out of the coach.

This dejected and provincial air need not surprise us in a youth of fifteen, who feels his

[1] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 57.

[2] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 76.

poverty keenly, and who, a scholar, comes to mingle in the noisy and extravagant life of the rich students of the Military School.

Napoleon, whose ideal was always the accomplishment of duty in all things, was scandalized at the spectacle presented to him by the Military School.

His keen discernment was shocked at seeing these young men, on the eve of being promoted to be officers, studying little, amusing themselves a great deal, and above all learning nothing whatever of a soldier's business. He sent the under-master at Brienne[3] a note which he contemplated forwarding to the Minister, in which he set forth that 'the King's scholars (foundationers) could only learn in the school, in place of qualities of the heart, feelings of vanity and self-satisfaction to such an extent that, on returning to their own homes, they would be far from sharing gladly in the simple comfort of their families, and would perhaps blush for the authors of their being, and despise their modest country surroundings. Instead of maintaining a large staff of servants for these pupils, and giving them every day meals of several courses, and keeping up an expensive stud of horses and grooms, would it not be better, of course without interrupting their studies, to compel them to be sufficient for their

[3] Chateaubriand, 'Mémoires d'Outre-tombe,' t. iii., p. 18.

own wants—that is to say, without compelling them to do their own cooking, to let them eat soldier's bread, or something similar, to accustom them to beat and brush their own clothes, and to clean their own boots and shoes, etc.? . . . Accustomed to a sober life, to be particular about their appearance, they would become stronger, would endure bad weather better, support courageously the hardships of war, and inspire with respect and blind devotion the soldiers who would have to serve under their orders.'[4]

If one is bent upon discovering the extraordinary, it may be easily found in these lines penned by a schoolboy of fifteen. Yet they seem somewhat natural in a boy whose mind is in a state of rebellion against the illusions natural to his age, and who can only see things through the uneasiness caused him by a large family in Corsica.

'All these cares spoiled my early years,' he himself said in 1811; 'they influenced my temper, and made me grave before my time.'[5]

This serious turn of mind, rare in a growing boy, aroused in Napoleon a precocious good sense which, in 1784, dictated to him the future bases of military education in the nineteenth century,

[4] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 62; Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 43; Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., p. 117.

[5] Duc de Vicence, 'Souvenirs,' part ii., t. ii., p. 192.

and which we find the Emperor prescribing, in 1808, to the Minister of the Interior: 'No pupil is to cost more than twenty sous (tenpence) a day; these pupils are sons either of soldiers or of artisans; it is absolutely contrary to my intention to give them habits of life which can only be harmful to them.'[6]

Had he not felt the misery that weighed down his family at Ajaccio, Napoleon might have shared to some extent the luxury and pleasures of his fellow students; he might also have subscribed to the sumptuous banquets that these boys used to offer to their masters. Had he wished to live the aristocratic life of the school, it would have been easy for him to run into debt, as most of his comrades did. But his inflexible will kept him in the strict path of duty; and when Monsieur Permon, seeing him in low spirits, offered to lend him money, Napoleon grew very red and refused, saying:

'My mother has already too many expenses, and I have no business to increase them by extravagances which are simply imposed upon me by the stupid folly of my comrades.'

His stay at the school was further saddened by the death of his father, which occurred at Montpellier at the age of thirty-nine on

[6] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xvi., p. 412, letter 13,643, to the Minister of the Interior at Paris, March 12, 1808.

February 24, 1785. On learning the news Napoleon wrote thus to his mother:

'Paris,
'*March* 29, 1785.

'My dear Mother,

'Now that time has begun to soften the first transports of my sorrow, I hasten to express to you the gratitude I feel for all the kindness you have always displayed towards us. Console yourself, dear mother; circumstances require that you should. We will redouble our care and our gratitude, happy if, by our obedience, we can make up to you in the smallest degree for the inestimable loss of a cherished husband. I finish, dear mother—my grief compels it—by praying you to calm yours. My health is perfect, and my daily prayer is that Heaven may grant you the same. Convey my respects to Lia Geltrude' (his godmother and aunt), 'Minana Saveria' (the servant), 'and to Minana Fesch, etc.

'P.S.—The Queen of France was confined of a Prince named the Duke of Normandy, on March 27, at seven o'clock in the evening.

'Your very humble and very affectionate son,
'Napoleone de Buonaparte.'[7]

Critics have declared the insertion of the post-script relative to the birth of the Duke of

[7] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., p. 123; De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 69.

Normandy to be 'curious'; for our part, we simply regard it as the spontaneous outburst of a young heart, trying by any means to diminish his mother's grief by communicating to her an event considered by everybody as a red-letter festival for the French family.

His heart overflows with grief. He writes to his great-uncle, the Archdeacon Lucien: 'It would be useless to tell you how deeply I have felt the blow that has just fallen upon us. We have lost in him a father, and God alone knows what a father, and what were his attachment, his devotion to us. Alas! everything taught us to look to him as the support of our youth. . . . But the Supreme Being did not permit it. His will is unalterable; He alone can console us.'

After these letters filled with such just and touching sentiments, written in childhood, we think that we may brush aside the oft-repeated assertion that Napoleon was not conversant with the French language.[8] The most indulgent critics are kind enough to admit that he knew how to address his soldiers in it!

His stay at the Military School offers nothing particular from the point of view of study. He worked well and on good lines, and passed his final examinations, notwithstanding the hostility of his German master, Bauer, who regarded him

[8] H. Taine, 'Origines de la France Contemporaine,' t. i., p. 11.

as unworthy to compete, and considered that 'the pupil Bonaparte was nothing but a fool.'[9]

This forecast was never verified, either then or later, for Napoleon passed No. 42 out of fifty-eight pupils promoted.

As at Brienne, so now did he preserve the greatest regard for the professors at the Military School; amongst others we will quote Monge, whose life is known; Monsieur de l'Eguille, whom Napoleon enjoyed receiving at Malmaison;[10] Monsieur Domairon, professor of literature, who was summoned to the Tuileries in 1802 to become Jerome's tutor;[11] and Brigadier Valfort, superintendent of studies, who owed to a fortunate meeting the happiness of seeing his declining years comforted by the grateful benefits of the First Consul, his former pupil.[12]

On September 1, 1785, the decree was signed, which named Bonaparte Second-Lieutenant in the company of bombardiers of the regiment of La Fère, garrisoned at Valence.

While awaiting his orders to join his regiment, he, in the highest spirits, as beseems a Sub-lieutenant of sixteen, put on his uniform, from

[9] De Coston, t. i., p. 61—'Mémorial'; Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 330.

[10] De Coston, t. i., p. 60.

[11] Walter Scott, 'Life of Napoleon I.,' vol. i., p. 17.

[12] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 74.

which all unnecessary smartness was excluded, as the state of his fortune only permitted what was absolutely requisite. 'His boots were so inordinately large that his legs, which were very slender, disappeared in them completely.'[13] Proud of his new outfit, he went off to seek his friends—the Permons. On seeing him, the two children—Cecilia and Laura (the latter was afterwards Duchesse d'Abrantès)—could not restrain their laughter, and to his face nicknamed him 'Puss in Boots.' He did not mind, it appears, for, according to one of these little wits, the Lieutenant took them a few days later a toy carriage containing a puss in boots, and Perrault's fairy-story.

His spare time, while at the Military School, had been divided between the frequent visits he paid to his sister Eliza—who was being educated at St. Cyr—and the Permons—old friends of the Bonapartes at Ajaccio. Napoleon often stayed with the Permons, occupying a room which gained for the house on the Quai Conti the commemorative slab which has since been removed from its frontage.

Early in October, 1785, Napoleon, having received his commission as Second-Lieutenant, quitted Paris, accompanied by his faithful *alter ego* of the Military School, Alexander des Mazis, who,

[13] 'Mémoires de la Duchesse d'Abrantès,' t. i., p. 112.

like himself, had been appointed to the La Fère regiment.

On his way through Lyons, Bonaparte saw Monsieur Barlet, a friend of his family, who had been secretary to the Governor of Corsica. Monsieur Barlet gave him a letter of introduction to the Abbé de Saint-Ruff of Valence, and a small sum of money, which the two young men quickly spent, regardless of the fact that they had still a long journey before them, and which they eventually had to continue on foot.[14]

[14] Honoré Vieux, 'Napoléon à Lyon,' p. 3; Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., p. 152.

IV.

Valence—First Symptoms of the Force of Habit in Napoleon—He associates as much with Civilians as with Soldiers—A Young Chatterbox—Attentions to Ladies—Care of the Sovereign for Persons he had known at Valence.

Napoleon reached Valence on November 5, 1785, and on his arrival received the warmest welcome from Gabriel des Mazis, brother of his travelling companion, and Captain in the La Fère regiment. Napoleon had reason to be pleased with the kindness of these two brothers, and they afterwards found that the man they had befriended was not ungrateful.

The two Des Mazis emigrated during the Revolution. On attaining power, Napoleon remembered them, and wrote and begged them to return to France and re-enter the army. They refused at first, giving as their reason that they would not fight against the King's supporters, and, finally, they only decided to take up civil appointments in 1806. Gabriel was appointed administrator of the lottery, and Alexander was

charged with the superintendence of the Imperial furniture.[1]

Bonaparte lodged, in Valence, with an old spinster, Mdlle. Bou, who kept a café and billiard-room. The front of the house formed the corner of the Grande Rue and the Rue du Croissant.

Here we find for the first time one of Napoleon's most distinguishing characteristics—clinging to old habits. Lodged, as we have seen, by order, in the house of Mdlle. Bou, he definitely took up his abode in a room on the first-floor fronting the street, next to the billiard-room—a noisy neighbourhood, which he would certainly not have chosen had not his orders conducted him thither. But once there he stayed, and lived there all the time he was in Valence. Moreover, in 1786, passing through Valence on his way to Corsica, he went straight to Mdlle. Bou's lodging. In May, 1791, he returned to Valence, and again occupied his room, bringing with him his brother Louis, who came with him from Auxonne. Finally, in 1792, as he was passing through Valence with his sister Eliza, he wrote beforehand to Mdlle. Bou.[2]

Vainly have we sought for any justification of

[1] Michaud, 'Biographie des Hommes Vivants.'

[2] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 77 *et passim.*

the statement made in these terms by Monsieur Jung: 'Bonaparte never attempted to become friendly with the officers of the army.'[3] Did he need to make the attempt, since the same author tells us farther on that at Valence Napoleon was on intimate terms with the two Des Mazis and Damoiseau, comrades at the Military School? We have shown what he did for the two former; the third became afterwards astronomer at the Bureau des Longitudes. His other friends, continues Monsieur Jung, were the Lieutenants Lariboisière and Sorbier, who became Inspectors-General of Artillery under the Empire; Mallet, brother of the author of the celebrated conspiracy; and Mabille, who afterwards deserted, but who, thanks to Napoleon's kindly recollection, was enabled to return to France, and even to obtain employment in the Post Office.[4]

If we add that Napoleon had all his meals at the lieutenants' mess, held at Géry's, Hôtel des Trois-Pigeons, Rue Pérollerie, that he took part in the ball given by the officers on the occasion of the feast of St. Barbara;[5] if we say that he was always on the best terms with Monsieur Masson d'Autumne, his first Captain, whom he visited in 1790 at his country-house near Auxonne after the

[3] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., p. 161.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Patroness of the artillery.—*Translator.*

Captain had left the service, and where he lived until the First Consul made him librarian of the school of engineering recently established at Metz;[6] that Napoleon's relations with the senior Lieutenant de Courcy were most cordial, and that he never failed to go and see him when he passed through Valence;[7] if we add that in 1814, finding Monsieur de Bussy, an old colleague in the La Fère regiment, acting as Mayor of the little village of Corbeny, he greeted him most warmly, immediately made him a Colonel, and took him on his staff as one of his aides-de-camp,[8] we shall have proved, we consider, that Lieutenant Bonaparte's relations with his colleagues were such as are customary between brother officers; and we shall have seen, also, the care that the First Consul and the Emperor took of the officers of Valence, as well as of those whom he had known at Brienne.

While Monsieur Jung, on the one hand, reproaches him with frequenting civil society too much, Monsieur Taine, on the other hand, accuses him of being 'savage and hostile'[9] towards these same civilians. These assertions, which cannot both be correct, are, in fact, both untrue; the

[6] De Coston, t. i., p. 78. [7] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

[8] Baron Fain, 'Manuscrit de 1814,' p. 165.

[9] H. Taine, 'Origines de la France Contemporaine'; 'Le Régime Moderne,' t. i., p. 10.

truth, simple as usual, is that Lieutenant Bonaparte's relations with civilians and soldiers alike were those of friendship, neither more nor less.

Napoleon was, at Valence, exactly what all lieutenants of seventeen, fresh from school, are in all garrison towns; they wish to appear to be in reality the men that they are by rank, though not by age. He showed himself 'a great talker, embarking on the smallest provocation in interminable arguments,'[10] 'developing those powers of pleasing which he possessed in a remarkable degree,'[11] applying himself, above all, as became his age, 'to pleasing the fair sex, who received him with acclamation.'[12] We can imagine him amiable, anxious to please, sought out by everyone in the drawing-room of Madame du Colombier; it is even reported that he made love, ever so little, to mademoiselle her daughter.[13]

In order to ensure his success, he attended Professor Dautel's dancing-classes. This Dautel afterwards became a tax-collector under the Revolution, and towards the end of 1808, having fallen into great want, he wrote to the Emperor:

[10] Stendhal, 'Vie de Napoléon,' p. 28.

[11] Walter Scott, 'Life of Napoleon,' vol. i., p. 18.

[12] Stendhal, p. 28.

[13] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 92. See also the Duchesse d'Abrantès.

'SIRE,

'He who helped you to make your first steps in the world throws himself upon your generosity.

(Signed) 'DAUTEL,

'Formerly dancing-master at Valence.'

On December 15 he received notice of his appointment to a controllership under the Excise.[14]

Napoleon also paid great attention to a pretty girl—Mdlle. Mion-Desplaces—of Corsican origin, and having relations still in the island; he often danced with her. He was also a constant visitor at the Abbé de Saint-Ruff's, at the house of Mdlles. de Saint-Germain and Laurencin, at the Abbé Marboz's, at the Roux de Montaignière's, and others, of all of whom he retained a p'easant recollection, and whom he assisted when he reached power.

We must make special mention of the elder of the brothers Blachette, who became Paymaster-General of the army; Marboz, prefectoral councillor; Mésangère, who made a career in Holland with King Louis, of whom he ultimately became Chamberlain and High Treasurer;[15] Mdlle. de Saint-Germain, afterwards wife of Montalivet, the Imperial Minister.

[14] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon.'

[15] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. ii., p. 83.

We may say here that, as at Brienne, none whom he had known ever appealed in vain to his memory. The friendships contracted during youth were always pleasant to him, and he enjoyed talking of them in later life, as, for instance, in writing to Madame Bressieux, formerly Mdlle. du Colombier:

'Pont de Briques (Camp de Boulogne),
'2 Fructidor, An. xii. (*August* 20, 1804).

'MADAME,

'Your letter was very pleasant to me. I have always remembered with pleasure your mother and yourself. I shall take the first opportunity of being of service to your brother. I see, from your letter, that you are living near Lyons; I must therefore reproach you for not having come thither while I was there, for it would have been a great pleasure to me to see you. Please believe in the sincere wish that I have to be of use to you.

(Signed) 'NAPOLEON.'[16]

Later on Madame Bressieux was appointed Lady-in-waiting to Madame Mère,[17] and her husband received a good appointment in the Office of Woods and Forests.

But while at Valence Napoleon did not allow

[16] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. ix., p. 478, No. 7,948.
[17] Napoleon's mother.—*Translator*.

himself to be entirely absorbed by worldly pleasures. He occupied himself with a History of Corsica, of which he sent the two first chapters to the Abbé Raynal, at the advice of the Abbé de Saint-Ruff and Madame du Colombier. After reading them, Raynal strongly urged the young author to continue his work.

V.

First Visit to Auxonne—Sadness—Sickness—At Ajaccio—Bonaparte a Revolutionary.

Napoleon spent a month at Lyons, whither the armed force had been summoned in anticipation of serious troubles. He went with his regiment to Douai, whence he started on leave for Ajaccio on February 1, 1787.

As he passed Valence he stopped at the house of Mdlle. Bou, and saw all his old friends.[1] Then he halted at Marseilles, and discussed his History with the Abbé Raynal.

On reaching Ajaccio early in March, his joy at being once more in the bosom of his family was considerably dashed by the precarious situation in which he found them. His uncle Lucien was in very bad health, could attend to no business, and all was in disorder. Napoleon, although suffering from a tertian fever, 'sets to work at everything and is everywhere, occupying himself with the restoration of Milelli's house, with the

[1] De Coston, t. i., p. 108.

re-establishment of the salt works, and with a mulberry plantation.'[2]

During a very short stay in Paris, where he lodged at the Hôtel de Cherbourg, Rue du Four-Saint-Honoré, he occupied himself exclusively with obtaining an extension of leave. Having received it, he returned to Ajaccio, which he eventually quitted at the end of January, 1788, to rejoin his regiment at Auxonne. Napoleon arrived there on May 1, 1788.

In this new garrison he was no longer the worldly officer of Valence, seeking for amusements and pleasures. His stay at Ajaccio had left in his heart a sense of profound sadness. Had he not left his mother and those dearest to him in a state of privation bordering upon misery?

He lodged in the Rue Vauban, at the house of Monsieur Lombard, professor of mathematics, whose classes he attended, never going out except to eat a frugal dinner with the Aumonts, who lived opposite.[3] These good people always had to summon him to dinner, which he invariably forgot. Immediately it was over he returned to his room and continued his work.[4] He is remembered as living very humbly at the expense of his health, nourishing himself chiefly on milk,

[2] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., p. 178.

[3] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., pp. 121-123; Pichard, Mayor of Auxonne, 'Napoléon à Auxonne,' pp. 2, 3.

[4] Jung, t. i., p. 186.

but without debt, without reproach, bearing his poverty with gaiety and nobility, and distinguishing himself by his love of work. When the classes were over, he explained the lessons to any who had not clearly understood.[5]

His good conduct and hard work gained for him the high approval of his chiefs; a proof of this is given in the following letter written by him to his uncle Fesch on August 22, 1788:

'You must know, my dear uncle, that the General here thinks very well of me, so much so that he has ordered me to construct a polygon, works for which great calculations are necessary, and I have been hard at work for the last ten days at the head of 200 men. This *unheard-of* mark of favour has somewhat irritated the captains against me; they declare that it is insulting to them that a subaltern should be entrusted with so important a work, and that when more than thirty men are employed one of them ought to be sent out also. My comrades also have shown some jealousy, but it will pass. What troubles me most is my health, which does not seem to me very good.'[6]

His constant uneasiness about his own family, his excessive work and privations, rendered him anæmic and feverish to such an extent that the

[5] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 79.

[6] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., p. 187.

regimental doctor, Monsieur Bienvalot, was far from feeling secure about his condition.

Napoleon's life at Auxonne was summed up in this fragment of a letter to his mother: 'I have no resources here but work; I only dress myself once a week; I sleep but very little since my illness; it is incredible. I go to bed at ten o'clock, and get up at four in the morning. I only eat one meal a day—at three o'clock.'

Fearing lest he should chagrin a mother already so tried, he hastens to add: 'It is very good for my health.'[7]

Illness, and the longing to see his own people, drove him at last to ask for six months' leave, which he obtained on September 1, 1789. He left Auxonne, stopping at Valence, where he saw his friends Madame du Colombier and the others.

At Marseilles he visited the Abbé Raynal,[8] to whom he entrusted his completed 'History of Corsica.' 'Raynal considered this work so remarkable that he forwarded it to Mirabeau. The latter, in returning the manuscript, wrote to Raynal that the little history seemed to announce a genius of the first rank. Raynal's answer was in accord with that of the great orator, to Napoleon's delight.'[9]

[7] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., pp. 203, 204.

[8] *Ibid.*, t. i., p. 212.

[9] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. i., p. 138.

Napoleon reached Ajaccio during September. Letitia Bonaparte had seven children at home, and, to complete the circle, only Eliza was wanting. She was at Saint-Cyr, where she had a scholarship.

The ideas of emancipation that were agitating the country were spreading into Corsica, and produced there even greater excitement than in France. The little Corsican nation, oppressed, treated as a conquered race for centuries past, was quite ready to rise in any revolution in the name of liberty.

Napoleon was not the last to enrol himself definitely in the revolutionary ranks. The criticisms he had set forth at the Military School, of the privileges of which he had had to complain from the time of his entrance to the school at Brienne, where favouritism stopped him from going into the navy, all tended to make him an adept naturally convinced of the necessity of abolishing such jobbery. He took a leading part at the clubs. He consecrated to the propaganda of the new theories the little strength that his illness had left him, and the scanty time that he spared from the interests of his family. On account of the state of his health he obtained an extension of leave for four months to go and take the waters at Orezza.

The date of his return to Auxonne is somewhat

uncertain. As the two Colonels—De Coston and Jung, his two most detailed biographers—do not agree, we will accept the decision of a third Colonel—the Chevalier de Lance, who at that time commanded the La Fère regiment, and who wrote to the Minister of War as follows :

'The Sieur de Buonaparte, Sub-lieutenant in the La Fère regiment, obtained an extension of leave last year at the conclusion of the six months' leave already granted ; this extension was allowed in consequence of medical certificates stating that his health necessitated his taking the waters of Orezza. The extension concluded on October 15 last, and as he only rejoined his regiment at the end of January last, he should lose three months and a half's pay.

'To recover this, he produces certificates from members of the Directory and the Municipality of Ajaccio, stating that twice he attempted to return to France, and that he was unavoidably detained till the month of January, which has decided his chiefs to support his application.'[10]

Less suspicious than Colonel Jung, we will accept the date of January, 1791, as that of his return to Auxonne.

[10] 'Archives de la Guerre ;' Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., p. 72.

VI.

Return to Auxonne with his Younger Brother, Louis—Father and Tutor to his Brother—Three Francs a Day for Two —Philosophy in Poverty—Visits to his Printer at Dôle— Morose Aphorism upon Love—Auxonne Friends under the Imperial Rule.

Napoleon did not return to Auxonne alone. He brought with him his brother Louis, whom he had insisted upon carrying off with the object of lightening the terrible burden that weighed down his widowed mother, left without means and with eight children.

The question now had to be settled how two should live upon the very meagre pay of a Sub-lieutenant — 920 livres a year, or 93 livres 4 deniers a month, which represents in present French coinage 92 francs 15 centimes (£3 15s.).

The two brothers, therefore, had to lodge, clothe, and feed themselves upon 3 francs 5 centimes (2s. 6d.) a day; and, moreover, Louis's education, which Napoleon had undertaken, had to be provided for.

This restricted budget forced Napoleon to live not in economy, but in poverty.

In the south wing of the barracks, first staircase, No. 16, there are two rooms adjoining each other, one furnished only with a wretched, curtainless bed, having a table in the embrasure of the window, some books, papers, a portmanteau, an old wooden box, and two chairs. Such was the room of the future Emperor. Close by was the room, still barer, if possible, where on a miserable mattress he slept who was one day to be King of Holland.[1] Such was the lodging of the two future monarchs.

Their parsimony in food was compelled to be on the same scale.

'Bonaparte,' says Monsieur de Coston, 'used himself to prepare the broth off which he and his brother dined philosophically.'[2]

'He prepared their frugal meal with his own hands,' says Monsieur de Ségur, adding: 'He brushed his own clothes.'[3]

The recollection of this period of want never departed from Napoleon, who twenty years later, having occasion to complain of Louis, said to Caulaincourt:

[1] 'Napoléon à Auxonne:' Recollections of Monsieur Pichard, Mayor, p. 4.

[2] De Coston, t. i., p. 151; Libri, 'Souvenirs de la Jeunesse de Napoléon,' p. 8.

[3] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 82.

'That Louis whom I educated out of my pay as Sub-lieutenant, God knows at the price of what privations! Do you know how I managed it? It was by never setting foot in society or in a café; by eating dry bread; and by brushing my clothes myself, so that they should last longer.'[4]

It was by remembering these days of his struggle between dignity and misery that the Emperor could tell a functionary who complained that his salary was insufficient for the needs of his family, although he held a post worth 1,000 francs (£40) a month: 'I know all about it, sir. . . . When I had the honour to be a Sub-lieutenant, I breakfasted off dry bread, but I bolted my door on my poverty. In public I did not disgrace my comrades.'[5]

At Auxonne we find Napoleon scrupulously occupied with the minutest details of his house-keeping, and a tailor's bill is extant upon which he gained a reduction of twopence.

The time not occupied by duty was taken up with teaching Louis, and hearing him his catechism in view of his first Communion, which was administered to him by the Abbé Morelet.[6]

[4] 'Souvenirs du Duc de Vicence,' part ii., t. ii., pp. 190, 191; Jung, t. ii., p. 73.

[5] 'Souvenirs du Duc de Vicence,' part ii.; 'Napoléon en Belgique.'

[6] Pichard, 'Napoléon à Auxonne,' t. i., p. 153.

He did not succeed in finding a publisher for his 'History of Corsica,' but was more fortunate with his letter to the Deputy de Buttafuoco. This vehement pamphlet, of which Monsieur Joly, printer at Dôle, became publisher, was intended to denounce the treachery towards Corsica of which the Deputy had been guilty.

'Napoleon used to go himself, with his brother, to correct the proofs of his letter. They would leave Auxonne on foot at four in the morning. After a frugal breakfast with Joly they started again, reaching Auxonne generally before noon, having performed eight leagues[7] during the morning.' They were sometimes a little later when they went round by Gray, when Bonaparte visited his old Captain, Masson d'Autumne, or when he stayed longer than usual at Dôle with Father Charles, the former chaplain of Brienne, whom he never failed to visit.[8]

Napoleon bore this state of wretchedness with the greatest resignation, or even with some gaiety. One day he said to Monsieur Joly, who came to see him :

'I am sure you have not heard Mass this morning. Well, I can say it for you.'

And he drew the priestly vestments of the

[7] About seventeen English miles.—*Translator.*

[8] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 149.



regimental chaplain out of the case in his room, where they were entrusted to his care.[9]

We can easily believe with Monsieur de Ségur that the consideration Napoleon enjoyed was much increased by the care that he took of his brother. He was gladly welcomed when, on rare occasions, from a sense of duty and propriety, he visited Monsieur de Gassendi, at that time Captain of the regiment, or Naudin, Commissary of War, or Monsieur Chabert, whose step-daughter, Mdlle. Pillet, deplored the rarity of the young Lieutenant's visits. It is said, too, that Madame Naudin was always glad to see him when he came to visit her husband.

He could not have spared much time for these frivolities, for among some notes written at Auxonne we find, in a dialogue upon love, the following outburst:

'I believe love to be hurtful to society and to man's individual happiness. I believe, in short, that love does more harm than good.'[10]

These sentiments are not surprising in a young man preoccupied by so many material cares: one must live before one can love. From very passionate letters written in later life, we shall see that Napoleon did not always practise the morose aphorism laid down by the Lieutenant of

[9] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 150.
[10] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. ii., p. 75.

artillery, and that his saddened heart would have been glad of any opportunity for singing the happiness of lovers.

Among the persons known at Auxonne to have received favours from the Emperor, we may mention his first protector, General du Teil, whom we shall meet again at Valence and Toulon, and whose heirs are mentioned for 100,000 francs (£4,000) in the will made at St. Helena; Monsieur Marescot, at that time Lieutenant, who afterwards became General; and Monsieur de Gassendi, who became General of Division, senator, Privy Councillor, and head of the artillery and engineer department of the War Office; Monsieur Naudin, who was applied for later on by the Commander-in-chief of the Army of Italy in these terms: 'I beg you to send us Commissioner Naudin. He is getting old, but I know him as an upright and honest man.'[11] On February 7, 1800, Naudin was appointed Inspector of Reviews, and finally became Governor of the Hôtel des Invalides.

[11] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. ii., p. 49, No. 1,087, to the Directory, Milan, October 12, 1796.

VII.

Third Visit to Valence—Competition at the Academy of Lyons —How his Panegyric of Paoli may apply to the First Consul —Secretary to a Revolutionary Club—In Corsica—Colonel of the National Volunteers—Conduct as a Soldier—He remains in Corsica in order to give his Pay to his Family —Disobedience to his Colonel's Orders—Disgrace.

In May, 1791, Napoleon, promoted to a first-lieutenancy in the 4th Regiment of Artillery, returned to Valence, accompanied by Louis.

As he was anxious to take up his former habits, and his old room in Mdlle. Bou's house was occupied, he took another room in the same house until he could return to his old quarters.

He was followed to Valence by the same want of money—the same penury. He had to see old friends, but he kept himself aloof from balls and parties. The care that he devoted to Louis's education left him but little spare time, and we must add that, as two had to live upon his pay, it did not leave much for the expenses of society. The few pence he could afford were spent upon a subscription to a library kept by Aurel,

and his few minutes of leisure were devoted to writing the essay intended for the competition at the academy of Lyons, of which the subject was: 'To determine what truths and feelings should be inculcated in men for their happiness.'

The following passage, extracted from the thirty pages of his article, will serve to show us how great was his admiration for the genius of Paoli, who had carried through a task analogous in more than one respect to that which was awaiting Bonaparte after the 18 Brumaire. All that Napoleon says here of Corsica, inspired by his illustrious compatriot, may equally be said of France regenerated by the First Consul:

'Monsieur Paoli, full of those feelings, of that genius which nature only unites in one man for the consolation of nations, appeared in Corsica, and immediately attracted the eyes of Europe. His fellow-citizens, tossed hither and thither by civil and foreign wars, recognised his ascendancy, and soon afterwards proclaimed him as the Athenians did Solon, or the Romans the Decemvirs. Affairs were in such disorder that only a magistrate, clothed with great authority and with transcendent genius, could save the country. Happy is the nation upon which social chains are not so tightly riveted as to make her dread the consequences of so rash a step! Happy if, possessing men justifying so unlimited a confidence, she finds them worthy of it! Having come to the helm of public affairs, called upon by his compatriots to give them laws, Monsieur Paoli established a Constitution not only founded upon the same principles as the one already in existence, but even upon the same administrative divisions. There were municipalities, districts, mayors, communal magistrates. He overturned the clergy, and gave to the nation the wealth of the bishops. The

onward march of his Government resembles that of our own revolution. In his unparalleled activity, in his persuasive and stirring eloquence, in his clear and penetrating genius, he found the means of guaranteeing his newly-fledged Constitution against the attempts of the wicked and the hostile, for the country was then at war with Genoa.'

Napoleon's ardour for the Revolution was great, and he became secretary to the club of the Society of Friends of the Constitution, whose members long preserved a recollection of his warm and vibrating harangues.

We think it was about this time that he wrote to Monsieur Naudin: 'The Southern blood flows through my veins with the rapidity of the Rhone.'[1]

His advanced opinions caused him to be unfavourably regarded by some of his chiefs who had remained faithful to the old state of things. He was, however, esteemed by some of his superiors, for we find him about this time summoned to the house of Monsieur le Baron du Teil, Major-General and Inspector-General of the troops in garrison at Valence. He spent several days at Pommier with the Baron's two sons—old comrades of his at Auxonne.

He was also on terms of intimacy with the Chevalier d'Hédouville—a Lieutenant like himself, but whose political opinions were diametrically opposed to his.

[1] De Coston, t. i., p. 177.

The Chevalier emigrated; and the Emperor, remembering him, recalled him to France through his brother Count d'Hédouville, General of Division.

The Chevalier presented himself at a public Imperial audience, and thought himself coldly received. As he was quitting the presence, a sign from Napoleon retained him; and when they were alone, the Emperor, taking the Chevalier by the ear,[2] said:

'Good-day, Chevalier; whence come you? You emigrated.'

The Chevalier stammered, and Napoleon continued with a smile:

'You lie. I see you will make a good diplomat,' and a few days later D'Hédouville was appointed Chargé d'Affaires at Frankfort-on-Main. When he was received in audience to take leave, the Emperor, addressing those round him, said:

'This is one of my old comrades with whom I broke many a lance at Valence on the subject of the Constitution of 1791.'[3]

Thanks to General du Teil, and despite the opposition of his Colonel,[4] Bonaparte obtained three months' leave in order to go to Corsica to restore Louis to his family.

2 Napoleon's special mark of friendship.—*Translator.*

3 De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 184.

4 Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., p. 117.

The two brothers arrived at Ajaccio in the early days of October, 1791, and Napoleon's stay there continued till the September of the following year.

Historians, who have made a virtue of discovering traces of bad instincts in all that Napoleon did, have distorted this holiday into an abandonment of his post *through cowardice*; though they do not actually use that word, their meaning is clear. These authors have also discovered therein traces of overweening ambition.

Here is the truth as it appears to us amid the darkness that surrounds these *Corsican affairs*, in which unfortunately we are unassisted by any eye-witnesses. The motives that governed Napoleon's conduct are of two different kinds, but are equally estimable.

First, the pecuniary position of his family could not fail to get worse amid the troubles of the Revolution, of which the effects were felt more strongly in Corsica than anywhere else. 'Disorder is at its height . . . the tribunals are unable to pronounce judgment . . . the taxes are unpaid . . . the peasants go out to their daily labour armed with guns . . . the elections are carried out under arms, and among scenes of violence.' Such is the report sent by Monsieur de Volney to the Assembly.[5] It will be easily

[5] *Moniteur*, Nos. 79, 80; Jung, t. ii., p. 112.

understood that, in such a condition of anarchy, the slender rents, the only resource of Madame Bonaparte, were paid badly or not at all. To this we must add that uncle Lucien, the devoted guardian of the family, died a few days after Napoleon's arrival (October 15, 1791), and we shall perhaps find sufficient reasons to induce an affectionate son to remain at home with a widowed mother and six children. Do not his own words, in a letter to Monsieur de Sucy, War Commissioner at Valence, èxplain the circumstances, though disguising the real state of the case?

'Imperious circumstances have compelled me, sir and dear Sucy, to remain here longer than I ought to have done consistently with my duty. I feel it, and yet I have nothing to reproach myself with. More *sacred* and *dearer* duties justify me.'[6]

We may even ask whether, in applying for the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel of the National Guard, Bonaparte's principal object was not to obtain the emoluments of the post, which amounted to 162 livres (about £10) a month, or nearly double the pay of a Lieutenant of artillery.

The other motive for his long sojourn at Ajaccio is no less noble, and is clearly indicated in a second letter to the same De Sucy:

[6] Jung, t. ii., p. 119; De Coston, t. i., p. 198.

'Under these difficult circumstances, the post of honour for a good Corsican is in his country.'[7]

Indeed, as soon as he returned to Corsica, Napoleon was in a better position than anyone to see, says Monsieur de Ségur, 'that Paoli, although loaded with honours by France, was seized with disgust at the sight of our revolutionary troubles, and that, as soon as he came back from London, he began secretly to stir up rebellion in Corsica. With this object he studied to gain over to the cause of independence the large family of the Bonapartes.'[8]

Paoli did not fail to flatter Napoleon. It was at this period that the old Corsican General said to the young officer the well-known words:

'You were cast in an antique mould; you are one of Plutarch's men. The whole world will talk of you.'[9]

Paoli's separatist projects, which only came to light six months later, did not escape Napoleon. 'Although on friendly terms with Paoli, he did not hesitate to declare himself on the side of the Assembly, which he embraced with eagerness.'[10]

Moreover, we must add that, in accepting

[7] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 203; Jung, t. ii., p. 121.

[8] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., pp. 87, 88.

[9] Stendhal, 'Vie de Napoléon,' p. 85; De Ségur, t. i., p. 88.

[10] Walter Scott, 'Life of Napoleon,' vol. i., p. 23.

service in the battalions of the National Volunteers, Bonaparte was only making use of a right which had been recognized by a decree of the Assembly, authorizing officers on active service to enter the said battalions,[11] and that it was upon the responsibility of Major-General de Rossi that he waited till his position was put in order, which was done by the letter of the Minister of War, Louis de Narbonne, to Monsieur de Rossi, dated January 14, 1792. Finally, in accepting his nomination as Lieutenant-Colonel, Napoleon put himself in conformity with the additional decree of December 27, 1791.[12]

Why, then, persist, as Monsieur Jung does, in seeing in this conduct crimes of insubordination and want of discipline 'enough to have shot him a hundred times over in ordinary periods'?[13]

But the times were not ordinary! If all the officers of that period had constantly followed the orders of their chiefs, without regarding the decrees of the Assembly, would the Revolution have succeeded? Various subversive publications had successfully combated the theory of passive obedience. They had taught the officers to neglect the letter, and to look for the spirit of the instructions they received. No doubt Napoleon,

[11] Law of August 4, 1791.
[12] *Moniteur*, No. 363.
[13] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. ii., p. 138.

though he disobeyed the orders of his Colonel, Maillard, executed those of the Assembly in the affair of the Capuchin convent.

Be that as it may, Napoleon was disgraced, denounced by Maillard, and summoned to Paris. He laid his conduct before the Minister, who not only absolved him, but restored him to his former position on the active list, with permission to return to Corsica, and to take up again his command of the National Guard.[14]

We think we have said enough to confute all the hostile criticisms that Bonaparte, at this period, deserted his military duties.

[14] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 88; De Coston, t. i., p. 217.

VIII.

Summoned to Paris to justify himself—The Pawnbroker's—A Dinner for Threepence—Disgust with Demagogues—Restored to his Rank—Departure for Paris with his Sister Eliza—The Family united at Ajaccio—Quarrel with Paoli, who wishes to separate Corsica and France.

Being summoned to Paris to justify himself, he arrived on May 20, 1792, and took the room No. 14 on the third floor of the Hôtel de Metz, Rue du Mail, kept by Maugeard.[1]

The time that he had to spend in waiting for an audience of the Minister was painful to him. The Permons' house was always open to him, but he would not abuse their hospitality.

It is known that at this time he fell into debt to the extent of fifteen francs with a wine-merchant.[2] He also pawned his watch with Fauvelet, who kept a furniture shop as well as a sort of national sale-room at the Hôtel Longueville.[3] This Fauvelet was Bourrienne's elder brother. The latter, who had entered the

[1] Marco Saint-Hilaire, 'Habitations Napoléoniennes,' p. 62.

[2] Chateaubriand, 'Mémoires d'Outre-tombe,' t. iii., p. 24.

[3] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 50.

diplomatic service, returned to Paris, found Bonaparte there, and the two old comrades of Brienne met again with the utmost pleasure.

'Our friendship of childhood and college days,' says Bourrienne, 'was as fresh as ever. I was not very happy, adversity weighed heavily upon him, and he often wanted money. We passed our time like two young men with nothing to do, and with but little money; he had even less than I. Every day gave birth to some new plans; we were always on the look-out for some useful speculation. At one time he wanted to hire with me several houses, then being built in the Rue Montholon, intending to make money by sub-letting them.'[4]

As neither of them had any money, it may be surmised that they encountered difficulties, especially from the proprietors, who, continues Bourrienne with delightful simplicity, 'made most exaggerated demands.'

The two young men amused themselves with these illusory schemes when they dined together at a humble restaurant—the Trois Bornes—in the Rue de Valois. Very often it was Bourrienne, the richer of the two, who paid the bill.[5] When Napoleon was alone, he dined at a still more modest house of entertainment, kept by Justat,

[4] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 48.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 49. This is on Bourrienne's authority only, and quite at variance with his usual avarice.

in the Rue des Petits-Pères, where each dish cost six sous (3d.).[6]

During this visit to Paris Napoleon was present at the great events which marked the year 1792. As he was walking with Bourrienne, he saw the mob from the outskirts making for the Tuileries on June 20.

'Let us follow these scoundrels,' he said.

It was when he saw this crowd, numbering between 5,000 and 6,000 men, ragged, ridiculously armed, shrieking out the coarsest abuse of royalty, that Bonaparte felt in all his being a disgust for mob rule, and when the King appeared at one of the windows of the palace, his head covered with a red cap, surrounded by revolutionists, and showed himself to the crowd of vagabonds, Napoleon could not refrain from exclaiming:

'*Che coglione!* Why did they allow these brutes to come in? They ought to have shot down 500 or 600 of them with cannon, and the rest would soon have run!'[7]

This exclamation was imprudent, made as it was in the thick of the crowd, but still more imprudent was the step he took on August 8.

On that day he went to the Permons', and found the whole house in an uproar; a member of the

[6] Saint-Hilaire, 'Habitations Napoléoniennes,' p. 65.

[7] Bourrienne, t. i., p. 49; De Coston, p. 214.

sectional committee, named Thirion, had just paid a domiciliary visit.

'It's an outrage! It's an infamy!' exclaimed Napoleon. 'What! four men come into your house without any warrant? You must complain. It is evident that this man has an old grudge against you, and thinks the opportunity favourable to have his revenge. We must not leave him time. I will see to it; let me do it.'

He would listen to nothing but his desire to save his friends from trouble, and rushed off to the sectional headquarters, where, at the risk of being arrested himself, he protested loudly against the action of which Permon had been victim.[8]

He was not disturbed by the horrors that surrounded him. He judged men and things very clearly, and wrote thus to his brother Joseph on July 3, 1792:

'Those who are at the head are a poor set of men. It must be admitted that the people, when one comes into close contact with them, are hardly worth all the trouble men take to earn their favour. You know the history of Ajaccio; that of Paris is exactly the same, only that there, perhaps, men are more petty, more spiteful, more back-biting, and more censorious. One must be in the middle of things in order to realize that enthusiasm is enthusiasm, and that the French

[8] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 188.

people is an old people, without prejudices, without bonds.

'Everyone seeks his own interest, and wishes to rise by means of lying and calumny; men intrigue more contemptibly than ever. All that destroys ambition. One pities those who have the misfortune to play a part, especially when they can do without it. To live quietly, to enjoy the love of one's family surroundings—that, my dear fellow, if one had 4,000 or 5,000 francs a year, would be the wise thing to do. One should also be between the ages of twenty-five and forty, when one's imagination has calmed down, and is no longer troublesome.

'I embrace you, and recommend to you moderation in everything—in everything, do you understand?—if you wish to live happily.'[9]

In the overheated atmosphere in which he lived, his mind remained calm and decided. He wrote to Lucien, who had addressed a proclamation to the Corsicans:

'I have read your proclamation; it is worth nothing. It contains too many words and too few ideas. You run after pathos; that is not the way to speak to nations.'[10]

[9] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. ii., p. 183.

[10] Letter of Bonaparte, communicated by Monsieur Blanqui at a meeting of the Academy of Moral and Political Science, October 14, 1838, also quoted by Jung.

He was present on the occasion of August 10, and saw the Tuileries invaded and the massacre of the last defenders of the unhappy King, who was afterwards dragged before the Assembly. He immediately had a presentiment of the appalling events that were to follow: 'Bonaparte, uneasy concerning the safety of his mother and family, wished to quit Paris for Corsica, where the same scenes were being enacted on a smaller stage.'[11]

Napoleon hurried on his business, but could not get it concluded as quickly as he wished. In spite of the favourable report of Vauchelle, the Ministerial decision was not yet given. He had to remain in Paris, notwithstanding his anxiety about his own people.

On August 13 appeared a decree of the National Assembly, ordering the evacuation of all the royal educational establishments. Bonaparte immediately took the necessary steps for withdrawing his sister from Saint-Cyr. At the same time he renewed his entreaties to the Minister Servan, who eventually, on August 30, countersigned the official letter reinstating Napoleon in the army with the rank of Captain of artillery,[12] and authorizing him, moreover, to proceed to Corsica to join his battalion of

[11] Walter Scott, 'Life of Napoleon,' vol. i., p. 21.

[12] Jung, t. ii., p. 201; War-Office Archives.

National Volunteers.[13] On September 1 he obtained from the administrators of the district permission to remove Eliza from Saint-Cyr, and to receive the money for travelling expenses to which she was entitled. The brother and sister remained together for a few days at the Hôtel de Metz, and thence went to Lyons, where they embarked on the Rhone. The old Valence friends —Mdlle. Bou and Madame Mésangère—brought a basket of grapes on board the boat for them.[14]

Napoleon and Eliza reached Ajaccio on September 17, 1792. For the first time for thirteen years the family were all reunited, and their joy would have been complete had their circumstances not been so sad and their difficulties so great. Their resources were diminishing day by day, and the recovery of what was due to them became constantly more difficult owing to civil discords. The only fund upon which they could rely seems to have been Napoleon's pay, and he now reassumed the leadership of his battalion of National Volunteers.

In the evening, after the younger children were in bed, Letitia would lament the wretched lot reserved for her daughters. Napoleon would seek to reassure her, declaring that he would go to India.

'I will return in a few years a rich nabob,

13 De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 217.

14 *Ibid.*, t. i., p. 219.

and will bring you a good portion for each of my three sisters.'[15]

Paoli's intrigues became more pronounced, and sharp quarrels occurred between him and Bonaparte. Before imputing all the wrong to the latter,[16] as has been done, it would be well to remember that the basis of disagreement was whether Corsica should become English, as Paoli desired, or whether she should continue French.

Napoleon took part in the expedition against Sardinia, commanding the artillery belonging to the detachment destined to make a diversion on the islands of La Madeleine, while Admiral Truguet attempted to seize Cagliari. These two attacks, that on Cagliari as well as that on La Madeleine, met with the same ill-success. It could hardly be otherwise with troops composed of all the scum of the population of the shores of Provence. In the first engagement the troops fled in terror, crying 'Treason!' This check received by French troops was well calculated to embolden Paoli in his separatist projects. He mentioned them openly to Bonaparte, who replied very roughly and indignantly that Corsica was French, that she would remain so for ever; that in France anarchy was ephemeral, and that it would be impossible to have too much contempt for 'venal'

[15] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. i., p. 74.

[16] *Ibid.*, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. ii., p. 212.

England.[17] What threats fell from Paoli at the end of this dispute? No one knows; but the fact remains that Napoleon anticipated reprisals from the old brigand chief, and he was not mistaken.

Indeed, Paoli, on quitting his excitable interlocutor, went straight to a kind of revolutionary consultation, where, after appointing a sort of Provisional Government, with himself, of course, as head, he decreed the arrest and expulsion of the entire Bonaparte family. Meanwhile, in order to escape the expected danger, Napoleon had started for Corte by devious paths.[18] On the road he learned what measures had been taken against his family, and the danger that they ran. Hearkening only to his filial duty, braving all the furious passions that were let loose against him, he returned to Ajaccio. At the gates of the town he heard that his belongings were in relative security, and that they were gone to Calvi.[19] He straightway retraced his steps and rejoined his mother and the others at Calvi, whence they all sailed for Marseilles, while the Paolists pillaged and burned the house at Ajaccio, and sacked all the property belonging to the Bonapartes.[20]

[17] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 95.
[18] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 237.
[19] 'Mémoires de la Duchesse d'Abrantès,' t. ii., p. 120.
[20] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 241.

IX.

Distress of Letitia and her Children at Marseilles—The 'Souper de Beaucaire'—Taking of Toulon—Little said about his Services at Toulon—His Toulon Friends are made Dukes of the Empire—Châtillon-sur-Seine, 1793 and 1814.

It was now June, 1793. Lucien, in his memoirs, has told us what was the situation of his mother and sisters at Marseilles. 'Napoleon, an artillery officer, devoted the larger part of his pay to the help of his family. In our character as patriots and refugees we obtained rations of soldier's bread and some slight assistance, enough to keep us alive, but we were above all aided by the economy of our good mother.'[1]

Here is another proof that Napoleon's position in Corsica was always perfectly in order—that no sooner did he return to France than he re-assumed his position as, and drew the pay of, a Captain of artillery.

Madame Bonaparte was helped at this time by Monsieur Clary, a rich soap-boiler, who was full of pity for the distress of the poor woman and

[1] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. i., p. 95.

her children. Clary had two daughters, Julie and Désirée, the former of whom, two years later, became Joseph's wife. The question of a marriage between the second and Napoleon was seriously discussed, but in the event Bernadotte married her.

Napoleon rejoined at Nice the 4th Regiment of Artillery which formed a portion of Carteaux's army, then engaged in suppressing insurrections in town after town in the South against the Constitution. Bonaparte received orders to go to Lyons to fetch some convoys of powder necessary for the army. Having met Carteaux, he was charged by the latter with various missions to Valence, Montélimar, Orange, Avignon, and Beaucaire. It was at this last place that he wrote his famous 'Souper de Beaucaire,' of which the object was to rally together, by means of persuasion, the numerous partisans of anarchical doctrines.

In these pages, printed at the time by Monsieur Marc Aurel, junior, bookseller at Avignon, one can already trace the style that Napoleon preserved throughout his life. We find the same startling and forcible images, such as: 'The people of Marseilles are sick and weak; they must have honey before they can swallow their pill.' We can also trace the germs of the military principles which Napoleon applied throughout his life: 'Only seasoned troops can resist the uncertainties of a siege; he who stays in his

entrenchments is beaten; upon this point experience and theory are agreed. The good artilleryman has the superiority in places where he is cut off, by the rapidity of his movements, the exactitude with which the service is performed, and the just valuation of distance.' And when he speaks of 'that brave battalion of the Côte d'Or which over and over again has seen victory go before it into battle,' or when he exclaims: 'But what vertigo has seized your people all of a sudden? What blindness is leading them to ruin?' does not one seem to hear the ringing proclamations of the Emperor?

The 'Souper de Beaucaire' has been honoured with favourable criticisms even by Napoleon's severest judges.

'It,' says one of them, 'is far from being a common-place work. Considering the conditions under which it was written, this work denotes singular prescience. From a military point of view it contains some curious aphorisms. From a political point of view it includes some clear and sensible appreciations. *Evidently there was no great elevation* [of mind], but it proves at any rate that this officer of twenty-five was abreast of the events of the time, and that he understood their synthesis.'[2]

During the night of August 27 a great act of

[2] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. ii., pp. 371, 372.

treachery was accomplished—Toulon was delivered to the English. Carteaux's army started immediately to recover the town. It was at first decided to seize the position of Ollioules. The attack was made on September 7; Dommartin, commanding the artillery, was wounded, and Napoleon appointed to succeed him by the Commissioners Salicetti and Gasparin.

It is a mistake to believe that Bonaparte commanded the whole artillery at the siege of Toulon. He had over him General du Teil,[3] his protector at Auxonne and Valence, who, dreading the terrible responsibilities that weighed at that time upon a commander, effaced himself completely, and left a free hand to the young leader of the battalion whom he had known as a Lieutenant, and whose value he had appreciated. It is therefore also a mistake to say that Bonaparte owed his advancement solely to the protection of Salicetti, his compatriot.[4]

If the taking of Toulon was the starting-point in Napoleon's unrivalled career, his share in the event was not regarded at the time as anything extraordinary. When Carteaux—that painter who was made a General by the Convention —'that fool Carteaux,' as Marmont calls him,[5]

[3] Marmont, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 39.

[4] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. ii., p. 380.

[5] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 38.

had been replaced by Dugommier, the serious operations of the siege began, and on the only occasion that one meets the name of Napoleon in the General's reports it receives no special mention, but appears collectively with many others who did good service, and are now entirely forgotten.

'Amongst those who distinguished themselves principally,' says Dugommier in his report of December 1, 'are citizens Bonaparte, commanding the artillery, Joseph Arena and Cervoni, adjutants.'[6]

Toulon was taken on December 17. In his report to the Convention, Dugommier makes no mention of Bonaparte. This victory of the Convention eased the way to the advancement of all who had been noticed, and thus it happened that Napoleon was appointed General of Brigade on December 22, together with Arena and Cervoni.

So little glory attached at this period to the name of Bonaparte, that Marmont, also an officer of artillery, never once mentions it in the very active correspondence that he maintained with his parents; and when, in 1794, Junot, writing home, announces that he is going to leave his regiment to become aide-de-camp to General Bonaparte, his father answers: 'Why have you left your commander Laborde?[7] Why do you

[6] War-Office Archives.

[7] By a curious turn of events Laborde subsequently served under Junot's command in Portugal.

quit your regiment? Who is General Bonaparte? Where has he served? Nobody ever heard of him.'[8]

During the four months the siege lasted, Napoleon's life was that of all the other officers. At Toulon he made the acquaintance of Muiron, who later became his aide-de-camp, of Marmont, afterwards Duke of Ragusa, and he frequently dined with the Commissary of War—Chauvet—(whose two pretty daughters had some attractions for the two young officers) in the company of Suchet, the future Duke of Albufera, at that time in command of a battalion. 'Napoleon so much enjoyed himself in that house that one evening he, who hated cards, made the excuse that it was snowing, and sat up all night playing with the young ladies.'[9]

His relations with Junot (Duc d'Abrantès), then a sergeant, also date from Toulon. Junot owed it to his beautiful handwriting that he afterwards became Bonaparte's secretary. We purposely omit the heroic exclamation of Junot when a cannon-ball came and threw up some dust over the lines he had just been writing at Napoleon's dictation. It has been said that his stoical courage, equal to that of Napoleon, who was near him, gained for him the friendship of the future

[8] 'Mémoires de la Duchesse d'Abrantès,' t. i., p. 404.

[9] *Ibid.*, t. ii., p. 71.

Emperor. True or not, this legendary anecdote seems to us unnecessary to explain the link between them; sufficiently plausible reasons are to be found, first, in the ages of the two young men, and, secondly, by the very natural wish on the part of Napoleon, whose writing was illegible, to attach to himself a comrade who, to great qualities, joined a masterly flowing handwriting.

Junot and Marmont both came from Châtillon-sur-Seine, and thence they received from their parents the supplies of money destined to soften the hardships of the siege. Most probably the name of Châtillon was often pronounced in Napoleon's presence by the two officers, who looked out impatiently for the postman's coming. Is it not strange to meet the name of this tiny town at the outset of Napoleon's career, as it also marks the last stage?—for it was at Châtillon-sur-Seine, in 1814, that the dethronement of the Emperor was finally settled by the Allied Sovereigns.

X.

The Pay of General Bonaparte restores Comfort to his Family —Confidential Mission — Imprisonment — Stoicism in Misfortune—Gratitude of the Emperor towards those who had befriended him in Trouble—Generosity towards his Persecutors.

Napoleon was now appointed General of Brigade and Inspector of the Coast, with a residence at Nice; but he did not allow himself to be dazzled by the brilliancy of a position so splendid for a young man of five-and-twenty. His first thoughts were again for his mother and family. 'Our family,' says Lucien, 'owed to Napoleon's promotion a more prosperous condition. In order to be near him, we established ourselves at the Château Sallé, near Antibes, a few miles from the headquarters. We were all united, and the General spent with us every moment he could spare.'[1]

He employed his new influence in lightening his mother's burdens, and succeeded in obtaining

[1] Lucien's 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 111.

for Louis, who was not yet sixteen, the appointment of aide-de-camp, with the pay of a Lieutenant, and kept him near himself.[2] He further obtained for Joseph a post as Sub-commissioner under Commissioner Chauvet.[3]

It was at this period that the younger Robespierre, uneasy at the attitude of the Convention towards his brother, and preparing to start for Paris, offered the young General the command of the garrison of the capital. Lucien thus relates the incident:

'Napoleon came over one day more thoughtful than usual, and, walking between Joseph and me, announced to us that it depended only upon him to start for Paris next day, in such a position as would enable him to settle all of us advantageously. For my part, I was enchanted. To reach the capital seemed to me a good which outweighed every other consideration.

'"I have been offered," said Napoleon, "Henriot's post.[4] I must give my answer to-night. What say you?"

'We hesitated a moment.

'"Well," continued the General, "it is a matter worth thinking about. It will not be so easy to keep one's head on one's shoulders at Paris as at

[2] War-Office Archives.

[3] Jung, t. ii., p. 399.

[4] Commandant of the Paris garrison.

Saint-Maximin.[5] Young Robespierre is honest, but his brother will stand no nonsense. He *will* be served. And I—shall I support that man? No; never! I know how useful I could be to him in replacing his fool of a Commandant in Paris, but that is just what I don't wish to be. It is not time yet. At present there is no honourable place open to me outside the army. Have patience; I will command in Paris presently. What should I do there now?"'[6]

How can anyone say after that that he was possessed of boundless ambition? No consideration, neither the settlement of his own family, which was so near his heart, nor the perspective of a magnificent position for himself, could carry the day against his strong feelings of duty.

He was sent from Nice on a political and military mission to Genoa. Here are the secret instructions that were given to him:

General Bonaparte will go to Genoa.

1. He will inspect the fortress of Savona, and the neighbouring country.

2. He will inspect the fortress of Genoa, and such of the country as it is important to know at

[5] Allusion to a dangerous exhibition of excitement on the part of Lucien in that town.

[6] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. i., p. 112; De Coston, t. i., p. 318; De Ségur, t. i., p. 125; Stendhal, 'Vie de Napoléon,' p. 67.

the beginning of a war of which it is impossible to foresee the results.

3. He will obtain all the information in his power respecting the artillery and other branches of the army.

4. He will provide for the safe conduct to Nice of 4,000 barrels of powder, which have been bought and paid for at Bastia.

5. *He will take care to go as thoroughly as possible into the question of the civic and political conduct of the Minister of the French Republic, Tilly, and of his agents, respecting whom we have received various complaints.*

6. He will take all the steps necessary, and will collect all the facts which may throw light upon the intentions of the Genoese Government respecting coalition.

Signed and delivered at Loano, 25 Messidor, year ii.[7]

(Signed) RICORD.[8]

Jung gives some supplementary instructions even more personal :

General Bonaparte will go to Genoa.

1. He will confer with the Genoese Government upon the defence of the coast from Mentone

[7] July 14, 1794.

[8] Stendhal, p. 58; De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. ii., p. 279.

to Loano, and upon the repairs of the road from Mentone to Loano.

2. He will officially inform the Genoese Government of the great road that the coalitionists are making from Ceva to Savona, making use of the names of some rich Genoese.

3. He will tell the Government that the French Republic cannot see with indifference that a passage is accorded over Genoese territory to hordes of brigands not enrolled in regiments, whom the mountaineers of the Riviera would have repulsed had not their goodwill been paralyzed.

Signed and delivered at Loano, 25 Messidor, year ii. of the Republic one and indivisible.

(Signed) RICORD.[9]

This mission obviously was confidential. Napoleon acquitted himself with all the care necessary to success. His excess of zeal was fatal to him, for it was a time when it was safe to have secrets from no one. This was very soon brought home to him.

After the 9 Thermidor, Ricord was replaced by Albitte and Salicetti. Good revolutionists, of course, owe it to themselves to arrest their predecessors. A warrant was accordingly issued

[9] Foreign-Office Archives; Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. ii., p. 437.

against Ricord, who, knowing what he had to expect, had taken refuge in Switzerland. The new Commissioners immediately ordered the arrest of Napoleon as 'suspect.' They were quite right, for what could be more suspicious than this secret journey to Genoa, of the motive of which these citizens were kept in ignorance?

Accordingly, on August 10, Napoleon was brought under a strong escort from Nice to Fort Carré, near Antibes, and there imprisoned.

Interludes of this kind were not rare in the life of generals at that period. Five months previously, to the day, Hoche had been arrested and imprisoned by order of Carnot and Collot d'Herbois.

No doubt, before being thrown into prison, Napoleon had every reason to believe himself safe for ever from the carking cares that had darkened his youth; and suddenly there were his glory, the comfort of his family, all that he had wrested from adverse fortune, gone apparently for ever. Were not prisons in those days anterooms to the guillotine?

After this first blow of fate, Napoleon showed himself the man he continued all his life—calm and stoical in adversity. Without losing heart, he wrote to Albitte and Salicetti, the two authors of his arrest, a request couched in most dignified language:

'I have served at Toulon with some distinction, and in the Army of Italy I have earned a share in the laurels that it acquired at the taking of Saorgio, Oneille, and Tanaro. Why am I declared suspect without being heard?

'I am declared suspect, and seals are placed upon my papers.

'The opposite course ought to have been taken; seals should have been placed upon my papers, and then I should have been heard, and asked for explanations; and, finally, I should have been declared suspect were there any reason for it.

'Hear me; do away with the oppression that surrounds me, and restore to me the esteem of patriots.

'An hour later, if the wicked desire my life, I will give it them willingly, I care for it so little, and have so often despised it! The thought that it may yet be of use to my country helps me to bear the burden of it with courage.'

His young aides-de-camp, Junot, Sebastiani, and Marmont, had formed a plan for his escape,[10] which they succeeded in communicating to Napoleon. The latter, strong in his innocence, addressed the following letter to them:

'I fully recognize your friendship, my dear Junot, in the proposition you make me; you have

10 De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 129; Marmont, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 55.

long known the sincerity of mine for you, and I hope that you trust in it. Men may be unjust towards me, my dear Junot, but for me my innocence is sufficient — my conscience is the tribunal before which I summon my conduct.

'This conscience is calm when I question it. Do nothing, therefore; you would compromise me.

'Good-bye, my dear Junot; all friendly greetings.

'BONAPARTE,
'Under arrest at Fort Carré, Antibes.'[11]

His papers were seized and examined by Denniée, but as absolutely nothing was found in them to implicate Napoleon, he had to be set at liberty.

Those who helped him during those days of anguish were never forgotten. The good fortune of Junot and Marmont is well known; Sebastiani became General of Division and Ambassador on several occasions, with large pensions. Denniée enjoyed a full share of Imperial favour; he was created a Baron and Inspector-General of Customs.

It is not uninteresting to note that the principal author of this iniquity, Salicetti, was employed on several occasions by the Emperor's Government,

[11] De Coston, t. ii., p. 288; Jung, t. ii., p. 454.

and that he finally became Minister of Police under King Joseph in Sicily.[12]

Let us also add, for the instruction of those who have denied to Bonaparte all human sentiments, that in June, 1795, less than a year after his arrest by Salicetti, the latter, being outlawed, and accused by the Convention, had taken refuge in the house of Madame Permon, whose daily guest Napoleon was. Napoleon pretended to be unaware of the presence of his persecutor, and contented himself, as his only vengeance, when Salicetti had started for Bordeaux well disguised and in absolute safety, with writing him a letter, from which we must quote the following lines:

'Salicetti, you see that I might have rendered to you the evil you did me, and, had I done so, I should have been avenging myself, while you harmed me without my having hurt you. Whose part is the finer now—yours or mine? Yes; I might have avenged myself, and I did not do so. Perhaps you will say that your benefactress (Madame Permon) served as a protection to you. It is true this consideration weighed powerfully with me. But alone, unarmed, and proscribed, your head would have been sacred in my eyes. Go; seek in peace an asylum where you may return to better feelings towards your country.

[12] 'Biographie Nouvelle des Contemporains,' Paris, 1825, t. xviii., p. 389.

My mouth will be closed upon your name, and will never open. Repent, and, above all, appreciate my motives. I deserve it, for they are noble and generous.'[13]

[13] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 350; De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 383.

XI.

Humiliation of having to leave his Post before the Enemy to take Part in the Civil War—Departure for Paris—Refusal to serve in the Infantry—Placed on the Retired List—Steps towards Restoration.

After thirteen days of imprisonment, Napoleon returned on August 24 to Nice. He took part in a successful demonstration made by the army on the Col de Tende, and was appointed Commandant of artillery of the naval expeditionary corps intended to act against Civita-Vecchia.[1] This movement was not carried out, as the French fleet was unable to pierce the lines of English ships. The French returned to Toulon, and the expeditionary corps was disbanded.

Finding himself without work, Bonaparte betook himself to Marseilles early in April, 1795. There he received orders to join the Army of the West, and take up the command of the artillery. This removal, if we are to believe Marmont,[2] 'seemed

[1] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. i., p. 480; De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 134.

[2] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 58.

a fatal blow to Napoleon's career, and everyone thought likewise. He quitted an army in presence of the enemy, to go and serve in one employed in civil discords. It might be reasonably hoped that the one would be called upon to strike great blows, to undertake important and glorious enterprises, while the other offered no brilliant prospects; obscure, painful, sometimes grievous services were all that could be foreseen. He had made his reputation by his actions, but his actions had not yet sufficient renown to make his name much known outside the limits of the army in which he had served; and though his name was pronounced with respect from Marseilles to Genoa, it was unknown in Paris, and even in Lyons. This change of destination must consequently have seemed to him a fatality, and he only submitted to it with the keenest regret.'[3]

Disappointed and humiliated, Napoleon, nevertheless, made his preparations for departure. He consoled himself by thinking that he could be somewhat more easy respecting the position of his mother, who remained with only her three daughters and Jerôme. Lucien had married, on May 4, 1794, at Saint-Maximin, Christine Boyer, daughter of an innkeeper; and Joseph had married Mdlle. Clary on August 4 of the same year.

[3] Marmont, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 60.

In spite of his personal annoyances, Napoleon again offered his services to his friends, as may be seen from the two following letters, one of the 7th and the other of the 30th April, written to Gassendi, who, as a noble, was threatened in his position :[4]

'I beg of you, my old and dear comrade, to furnish my brother Louis with the carriages necessary for the removal of my effects and papers to Marseilles.

'I am about to leave you ; I am only waiting for Dujard, and shall start a few days after his arrival here.

'I have a right to a share of your friendship. I pray you to let me know if, on my way through Paris, I can be of any service to you. I flatter myself that you still count upon my friendship. My kind regards to Songis.'

'. . . I am going through Paris, and will leave nothing undone to obtain for you either the governorship of Toulon, or that of the foundry at Valence. Pray write to me as your commissioner, and specify what you wish me to do for you. . . .'[5]

The translation of these words, 'I am going through Paris,' is that Bonaparte had decided to take up his post—La Vendée.

On the journey, the four friends stayed for a

[4] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon.'

[5] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. ii., pp. 475, 479.

few days with Marmont's father. On reaching Paris they stayed at the Hôtel de la Liberté, a modest establishment in the Rue des Fosses-Montmartre.[6] The price of the rooms for the four travellers was discussed, and eventually settled at seventy-two livres (about £4) a month.

Here is Napoleon's moral situation as described for us by Monsieur Jung :

'A military career was to be for him a more or less lucrative undertaking, according as he understood how to work it. . . . He remained alone with his sword, and, like a true *condottiere*, was ready to offer it to the highest bidder. . . . Such was General Bonaparte, a living synthesis of good and evil, a monstrous creation, waiting only disaggregated surroundings to attain his full development.'[7]

This portrait, applied to Bonaparte in 1795, is not exact. We intend to show presently that it is unnecessary to attribute Machiavellian motives to Napoleon, in order to explain matters of absolutely commonplace simplicity.

As soon as he reached Paris, Napoleon went to the War Office, of which the lately-appointed Minister was a certain Aubry—an old Captain, who by a scratch of his pen had made himself General of Division and Inspector-General of

[6] Marmont, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 62.
[7] Jung, t. ii., pp. 480, 481.

artillery, and erased Napoleon's name from the lists of the latter, and inserted it in the infantry. Here is Hoche's opinion of this extraordinary Minister: 'The Army of the Sambre-et-Meuse (58,000 men) has been short of supplies for the last three months, and is living without the help of the contractors; perhaps Monsieur Aubry is asking himself whether this army is in the North or the South.'[8]

Napoleon went to complain, and a scene ensued.

'You are too young,' repeated Aubry, who had never made a campaign; 'you must let your elders go first.'

'One ages quickly on battle-fields, and I have just left one,' was Napoleon's answer.

The Minister, attached to his prejudices, stood by his decision, and the young General definitely refused to be enrolled in the infantry.

His position was irregular, even critical. Barras and Fréron, whom he had known at Toulon, interceded for him with the Minister, but all they could obtain was a permission to remain in Paris, without pay. If he could hold out till August 4 he was saved, for on that day Aubry was to leave the War Office.[9]

In this wish not to command a brigade of

[8] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 38.

[9] Jung, t. iii., p. 38.

infantry, people have tried to discover all sorts of dark designs, carried out by Italian subtlety—that is the sacrosanct expression! Nothing could be less true. Napoleon's attitude will be explained to us by one who, when he wrote his memoirs, was far from being his apologist.

'They who have not served in the artillery,' says Marmont, 'can have no idea of the sort of contempt with which formerly artillery officers regarded service in a line regiment. They thought that they were lowering themselves by accepting a commission either in the cavalry or infantry.'[10]

This first remark throws a clear light upon the determination of a General of twenty-five, who, already annoyed at having to quit a post in presence of the enemy, finds himself, to complete the measure of his degradation, handed over to a service reputed inferior by everybody. Here is his own personal opinion, written to his friend Sucy, upon the subject:

'I have been ordered to serve as General of the line in La Vendée. I will not accept. Many soldiers could direct a brigade better than I, and few have commanded artillery with greater success.'[11]

The formal proof of his intention of rejoining

[10] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 63.

[11] 'Facsimile of Napoleon's Autograph;' De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t ii., note xviii.

his post as General of artillery, notwithstanding his repugnance to serving in a civil war, is contained in a letter to his brother Joseph :

'Richard, Junot's servant, who had started with my horses, has been taken by the Chouans five leagues from Nantes. Horses here are priceless. The one I gave you is worth five times what it cost me, so keep it.'[12]

Supposing that, at that moment, he had conceived the chimerical projects with which he is credited, he would have accepted the command of a brigade of infantry with the utmost alacrity. For if to an artilleryman, in love with his service, it was a slight, it was a windfall to an ambitious man. A General commanding the artillery of a corps is always in a subordinate position, whereas the head of a brigade, often isolated from the rest of the army, may all of a sudden gain renown by a fortunate encounter with the enemy.

His must be a curious kind of ambition, it must be conceded, that prefers the important but always subordinate post of Commandant of artillery to a post which, with good fortune, may lead him direct to popularity!

May we not equally conclude that his sword was not, as was said, 'at the orders of the highest bidder,' 'to the man who offers first and offers

[12] Correspondence of Napoleon with Joseph : 'Mémoires du Roi Joseph,' t. i., p. 134.

most'?[13] For on this occasion, at any rate, he carried it to poverty, disdaining to purchase fortune at the cost of an indignity.

He then had to part with his superfluity in order to secure the necessary. He sold his carriage.[14] He spent his days in trying to enlighten the powers that were as to the refusal of justice of which he was the victim. In these visits he was not very bold.

'One day,' says De Ségur,[15] 'he went, memorial in hand, to Fréron, Rue de Chabannais; but on reaching the door he stopped, hesitated, and, unable to make up his mind to appear as a petitioner before the representative of the people, he allowed Sebastiani to go upstairs and enter the presence of the Deputy alone. Strong but fruitless support was nevertheless given to his prayer.'

He was more enterprising in the steps that he took at this time in favour of his brother Lucien, who was in prison at Aix. Napoleon did not hesitate to see Barras and Fréron, whom he had known at Toulon, and with whom he was more fortunate, as he was probably more earnest, than

[13] Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. ii., p. 481; H. Taine, 'Origines de la France Contemporaine'; 'Le Régime Moderne,' t. i., p. 16.

[14] Bourrienne. 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 71.

[15] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 144.

he had been for himself. 'Thanks to the protection of Barras, and, above all, to the urgent steps taken in his behalf by Napoleon and Fréron, Lucien obtained his release.'[16]

Napoleon did not boast of his success in this matter, for this is how he announces the result to Joseph:

'Lucien has got himself arrested; a courier, who starts to-morrow, carries the order from the Committee of Public Safety to set him at liberty. I am going to write to Madame Isoard to give Lucien some money; I will place it in good hands before leaving Paris.'[17]

The remainder of his time was passed in gratuitous and instructive amusements. One day he is at the observatory, where he takes lessons in astronomy from the celebrated Lalande.[18] Another is spent at the Jardin des Plantes with his faithful friend Junot. There, in the alleys of the garden, they talked intimately about family matters. Junot was very much in love with, and ardently wished to marry, Pauline Bonaparte.

The wisdom and prudence displayed by Napoleon in putting off Junot, who was seeking

[16] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien,' t. i., p. 121; De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 143.

[17] Correspondence of Napoleon with Joseph, letter of July 30, 1795; 'Mémoires du Roi Joseph,' t. i., p. 137.

[18] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 144.

to make the most of his position, are worth noticing:

'I cannot write and put this request before my mother, for you will some day have 1,200 livres (£75) a year, and that is very good; but you have not got them now. Your father is a strong man, and will keep you waiting a long time. At present, in short, you have nothing save your Lieutenant's epaulettes, and Pauline has not even that much. Now let us sum it all up: You have nothing; she has nothing—total, Nothing. You cannot, therefore, marry at present; let us wait.'

He comforted Junot by promising to agree to the marriage when he should be, not rich, but in sufficiently easy circumstances not to have the grief of bringing into the world children who might be in poverty.[19]

One day, when walking with Fesch and Patrault, his former mathematical master, he met his friend Bourrienne on his way to rent some rooms at 19, Rue des Marais. Observing opposite to that house another one standing empty, he conceived the plan of hiring it with his companions.

'If I could have that house,' he said, 'with my friends and a cabriolet, I should be the happiest of men!'[20]

[19] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. i., pp. 198, 199; De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 144.

[20] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 81.

The position became more and more strained; the party lived, for the most part, upon the money that Junot received from his family.[21] Bonaparte endured his painful position with great calmness and relative gaiety.

'He often,' says Bourrienne, 'came to dinner with my elder brother and me, and always rendered our meetings pleasant by his agreeable manners and the charm of his conversation.'[22]

When Junot had received no money, Napoleon would take him to dine at Madame Permon's, mother of the future Duchesse d'Abrantès, and would say laughingly:

'Madame Permon, the galleons have not yet arrived. I bring you a guest.'[23]

[21] Duchesse, d'Abrantès 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 194.

[22] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 71.

[23] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 407.

XII.

In Disgrace—Constant Anxiety respecting his Younger Brother —Ironical Reflections upon Parisian Society.

THE state of his mind, during this difficult period, is revealed to us by the close correspondence he maintained with his brother Joseph. In every letter we see how close to his heart were the members of his family :

May 23.—'I spent yesterday at Ragny, the property of Monsieur de Montigny. If you were inclined to do a good stroke of business, you might buy the place for 8,000,000 of assignats. You might invest 60,000 francs (£2,400) of your wife's dowry in it. Such is my wish and my advice. . . . I think this chance of investing part of your wife's money is unique. Assignats are decreasing in value every day.'

June 23.—'I will do what I can towards finding an appointment for Lucien. . . . Jerôme writes to ask me to get him a pension, but I can do nothing at present.'

June 24.—'I have not been able to obtain for

Louis a commission in an artillery regiment; considering, however, that he is only sixteen, I shall send him up for his examination at Châlons, whence he will pass out in a year as an officer.'

June 25.—'Whatever fortune may have in store for you, remember that you have no truer friend, no one who more earnestly desires your happiness, than I. If you are going away, or you expect your absence to last long, send me your portrait. . . . Louis is at Châlons-sur-Marne; he has been there about a week. There he will soon become a man; his intelligence is good; he is learning mathematics and fortification.'

'. . . I will get a consular appointment for you in the kingdom of Naples as soon as we are at peace with that Power.

'. . . I am writing to your wife. I am very pleased with Louis; he is responding to all my hopes, and to the expectations I had conceived for him. He is a good fellow, one after my own heart: warmth, intelligence, health, talent, business qualities, kindness of heart—all are united in him. You know that I live only for the pleasure I can give my own people.'

'. . . Write to Louis, and tell him that you are looking out for his first drawing, to prove to you what progress he has made.'

In collecting and grouping together these letters, written in a space of three months, it is

worth noticing that they are not paraphrases. They are the exact words, drawn from authentic sources, from which those of his adversaries, who are least suspected of partiality, have drawn their arguments.

Although a prey to the most carking anxiety respecting his own future, he employs what interest remains to him in the service of his family. His heart forgets nobody. We need not be surprised if, in these letters, he seems less preoccupied about his mother and sisters. Her eldest son's happy marriage had procured relative comfort for Letitia and her daughters, who lived near the Clarys, Joseph's parents-in-law.

Was he, as has been said, possessed of excessive personal ambition? Nothing in the memoirs of the time prove it. Neither Bourrienne nor Marmont mentions it; their silence is an admission which is confirmed by the simple and natural confidences that Napoleon makes to his brother, to whom he relates his daily impressions upon current politics, and on his own personal situation: 'I sent you the Constitution yesterday by Casabianca. Everything is going up in price in a terrible manner. Life will soon be impossible. The harvest is expected with impatience.'[1]

'I am employed as General of Brigade in the

[1] 'Mémoires du Roi Joseph,' letters from Napoleon, Paris, May 29, 1795.

Army of the West, but not in the artillery. I am ill, and compelled to take a holiday of two or three months. When my health is restored, I will see what to do. To-day they are reading the Constitution in the Convention, from which people expect peace and tranquillity. I will send you a copy as soon as I can get it after it is printed.'

Notice how he avoids worrying his brother. By the phrase 'I will see what to do' he scarcely gives him a chance of guessing that he has refused the brigade of infantry.

But his melancholy shows itself in this sentence: 'Life is a dream which soon vanishes.'

As if he felt remorse for having complained, he writes another letter a few days later, in which he talks of everything except himself:

'Every day some new articles of the Constitution are decreed; complete tranquillity reigns, bread continues scarce, and the weather, being rather cold and damp for the time of the year, delays the harvest.

'Luxury, pleasure, and art are once more taking their place here in an astonishing manner. Yesterday "Phèdre" was given at the opera for the benefit of an old actress; the crowd was immense by two o'clock in the afternoon, although the prices were tripled. Carriages and smart people begin to reappear, or, rather, they seem to

forget, as one forgets a dream, that they ever ceased to glitter. Lectures on history, chemistry, botany, and astronomy follow each other; everything is crowded together in this country that can render life pleasant. One is taken out of one's self, and how can one take a gloomy view of things amidst this ever-moving whirlpool? Women are everywhere—at the theatres, out driving, at the lectures. In the study of the man of science you may meet very pretty people. Here alone, of all the kingdoms of the world, does woman deserve to hold the rudder. The men are mad about them; they think of nothing else, and only live by and for them. A woman needs six months of Paris to know what is due to her, and how great is her sway.

'Junot is here living like a lord, and spending as much of his father's money as possible. Marmont, who had accompanied me from Marseilles, is at the siege of Mayence.'

'All goes on well here; the South alone is excited. There have been some scenes produced by a few young men—mere folly. On the 15th they are going to renew a portion of the Committee of Public Safety. I hope they will make a good selection.'

Who would think from this that the Committee of Public Safety was anything but a matter of the merest indifference to him? Yet

it was to bring about the retirement of Aubry, Minister of War, his determined enemy.

'. . . All is quiet. We heard yesterday, with intense pleasure, of the peace concluded with Spain and Naples. The public funds are rising, and the assignats going up in value. It is not hot here as yet, but the harvest is as splendid as could be wished. This great nation is absolutely given up to pleasure. Dances, theatres, women—who are certainly the most beautiful in the world—are the all-important matters. Comfort, luxury, and good manners have once more taken their place; no one remembers the terror except as a bad dream.'

'People are on the whole very satisfied with the new Constitution, which seems to promise happiness, prosperity, and a long future to France. The peace with Spain has sent up the assignats considerably. There is no doubt that this country will soon settle itself again; it will only require a few years.'

'People here seem very well, and given up to gaiety. One would say that everybody wishes to indemnify himself for what he has suffered, and that future uncertainty is no reason for not having enough pleasure in the present.'

'I am satisfied, and want nothing but an opportunity of being present at a battle. A warrior must pluck laurels, or die on the bed of glory.'

'I cannot understand what is going on at Ajaccio. They still seem to be massacring each other in that poor country. What will be the end of Paoli?'

'Paris is still the same—given up to pleasure, women, balls, theatres, and artists' studios. I, slightly attached as I am to life, seeing it all without much caring, live in the state of mind in which one spends the eve of a battle, convinced that when one knows that death is hard by, which will put an end to everything, it is folly to distress one's self. Everything tends to make me defy fortune and destiny, and if this state of mind continues, I shall end by not taking the trouble to get out of the way of a passing carriage. My mind is sometimes astonished at its own condition, but it is the result that the moral condition of this country has produced in me.'

'I am at present attached to the topographical department of the Committee of Public Safety in Carnot's place. If I ask for it, I can go to Turkey as General of artillery, sent by the Government to organize the artillery of the Grand Signor, with good pay and the very flattering title of Envoy.'

'The Commission at present employing me . . . is so flattering towards me, that I doubt my being allowed to go to Turkey; we shall see. . . . Write to me soon, on the chance of my going to Turkey.'

'All is very quiet here; one-third of the Convention is to be renewed. I am worked to death from one o'clock in the day. At five I have to be at the Committee, and from eleven at night till three in the morning.'

'To-morrow I shall have three horses, which will allow me to go about in a cabriolet, and to see after all I have to do.'

'I have just read, in a printed report from Cambon on affairs in the South, this sentence: "We were in imminent danger when the courageous and brave General Bonaparte put himself at the head of fifty grenadiers, and opened a passage for us. . . ."'

From these impressions, written daily, we can see how contemptuously he regards all these people hungering after pleasure, who, yesterday a prey to the most horrible anxiety, yield so quickly to the delirium of luxury and debauchery.

Did he already aspire to a great position? It is unlikely. In any case, no one could have suspected it from his discreet utterances upon the topographical department. But yet, if he had such ambitions, what an opportunity! Far from thinking of it, however, his one desire seems to be to leave his employment, and go to Turkey as General of artillery. That is his one idea, and he is ready to sacrifice everything for the sake of getting back to his dear cannon!

XIII.

First Ideas of Marriage—The Soap-boiler's Daughter—Eugénie-Désirée Clary—Her Refusal.

We have seen how much Napoleon was taken up with women. He admires them, and with the simplicity of a young heart fancies he has discovered the secret of their attraction. 'He envied,' says Bourrienne, 'Joseph's happiness, who had just married at Marseilles Mdlle. Clary, daughter of a rich tradesman in the town who enjoyed a good reputation. *What a lucky rascal Joseph is!* That was the way in which he expressed the slight feeling of envy that was in him.'[1]

In order to enjoy the same happiness as his brother, he had cast his eyes upon Joseph's sister-in-law, Eugénie Désirée Clary. Here is the story of his avowals, showing his determination since his first meeting with her at Nice:

'Remember me to your wife and to Désirée,' he says in one of his letters to Joseph. A month later he is not sure that his love is returned.

[1] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. i., pp. 71, 72.

'Désirée asks for my portrait. I will have it taken for her. You must give it to her, if she still wants it; if not, keep it yourself.' Désirée was gone to Genoa with Joseph and his wife. Napoleon thinks himself forgotten.

'In order to get to Genoa, it seems necessary to cross the river Lethe, for Désirée has not written to me since she went to Genoa.'

He becomes angry, and insists upon having news of her; if not from herself, at any rate from Joseph. 'I believe you purposely omit all mention of Désirée; I don't know whether she is alive or dead.' Five days later he writes: 'If I go to Nice I shall see you, and Désirée too.' Two days later he again mentions the subject: 'You never mention Mdlle. Eugénie to me.' This time he speaks of her as Mademoiselle and Eugénie, hoping, no doubt, that he may be more fortunate if he adopts this ceremonious style.

At length, on August 9, he receives a letter, and reproaches Joseph for not having reassured him sooner: 'I have had a letter from Désirée, which seems to me very old; you never told me of it.' Feeling certain then that he was not quite indifferent to her, he unfolds his intentions to Joseph: 'If I remain here, it is just possible that I might feel inclined to commit the folly of marrying. I should be glad of a line from you on the subject. You might, perhaps, speak to

Eugénie's brother, and let me know what he says, and then it will be settled.' Next day he writes again: 'Continue to keep me carefully informed; talk to me of your own plans, and try so to arrange my business that my absence may not prevent that which I long for.' At the end of the same letter he adds: 'The affair with Eugénie must be settled one way or the other. I await your answer with impatience.'

This tenacity in the pursuit of Mdlle. Clary showed itself at the moment when Napoleon was already employed by the Committee of Public Safety—that is to say, when he was in a position favourable to an ambitious man. Had he conceived at that time any hope of playing an important part in France, he would probably also have realized the advantages that might accrue from keeping a free hand with respect to matrimony.

Notwithstanding all his entreaties, his feelings were not returned. Désirée was destined to have a throne one day, but it was in Sweden, and shared with Bernadotte. In 1798 Napoleon preserved of this episode only a pleasant recollection, and he wrote:

'I hope Désirée will be happy if she marries Bernadotte; she deserves to be.'[2]

[2] 'Mémoires du Roi Joseph,' t. i., p. 188, letter dated from Cairo.

XIV.

Mental and Physical Sufferings—An Unknown comes to the Rescue and presents him to Pontécoulant, Minister of War—Bonaparte's Incredulity—Plans of Campaign in Messengers' Drawers—Entrance into the Committee of Public Safety—Eminent Services—Retirement of Pontécoulant—Succeeded by Letourneur.

FROM these letters to Joseph we see that Napoleon had succeeded in obtaining employment in the War Office. How had he made his way into the topographical department of the Committee of Public Safety, which served as a powerful spring-board to two men in this century —Napoleon and Carnot? It was at the cost of many vicissitudes.

The serenity affected by Napoleon in his correspondence was superficial. He was morally and physically wretched. He was to be met wandering about the streets of Paris 'in an awkward and ungainly manner, with a shabby round hat thrust down over his eyes, and with his curls (known at that time as *oreilles de chien*) badly powdered, badly combed, and falling over

the collar of the iron-gray coat, which has since become so celebrated; his hands, long, thin, and black, without gloves, because, he said, they were an unnecessary expense; wearing ill-made and ill-cleaned boots. . . . But his glance and his smile were always admirable,'[1] and helped to enliven an appearance always sickly, resulting partly from the yellowness of his complexion, which deepened the shadows projected by his gaunt, angular, and pointed features.

He thus walked about, carrying with him his load of sadness. If he forced himself to be merry, he was not so at heart, and he could not always control himself. 'The day after our second return from Germany, in 1795,' says Madame Bourrienne, 'we found Napoleon in the Palais-Royal, near a shop kept by a certain Girardin. Bonaparte embraced Bourrienne like a comrade whom one loves and whom one meets again with pleasure. We went to the Théâtre-Français, where they were acting a tragedy, and "Le Sourd, ou l'Auberge pleine." The audience was convulsed with laughter; Bonaparte alone —and I was much struck by it—preserved an icy silence. . . . Another time he disappeared from us without saying a word, and when we thought he must have left the theatre, we espied him seated in a box on the second or third

[1] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 179.

tier, all alone, looking as though he wished to sulk.'[2]

His thoughts, indeed, were far from theatres. He was not in the humour to laugh. Every minute might bring him his definitive disgrace, and he therefore sought to make a means of existence for himself in view of his imminent recall. He thought he had discovered a new plan, which was that of exporting books. 'His first venture was sending a case of books to Basle, and it turned out badly.'[3] It was at this time, too, that he was vainly soliciting permission to realize his favourite project of going to Turkey to instruct the armies of the Grand Signor, as he was then called.

Nothing ever seemed to go well with him. The fruit of his deeds of arms at Toulon and in Italy was lost by the indifference of the Minister Aubry. His protectors, Barras and Fréron, whom he had known with the Army of Provence; Marriette, rescued by him from the hands of the populace of Toulon,[4] bowed him out with fair words; finally, even the offer of his heart was despised by the 'silent' Désirée Clary. These events all united to plunge into the deepest despair a mind that had caressed all the dreams

[2] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' pp. 78-81.
[3] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 145.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 163.

and visions that might pass before the eyes of a General of five-and-twenty!

Happiness came to him from an unexpected quarter, not from the supporters upon whom he thought he might count, not from Barras, or Fréron, or Marriette. It was none of these who saved Napoleon, but it was a man whom he hardly knew—Boissy d'Anglas, who gave him the only post in which he could display his aptitude for a chief command.

In June, 1795, Monsieur de Pontécoulant, member of the Committee of Public Safety, joined the Committee of War, and was charged with the direction of military operations. He accepted this weighty task on condition of being left absolute master of his actions. 'In order to secure quiet, and to be out of the reach of suitors, he had established himself in a garret on the sixth floor of the Pavillon de Flore at the Tuileries.'[5] His task was enormous and new to him. In the South alone he had four armies to direct. He knew not how to begin this work, so great was the disorder that reigned in the War Office at that period. Such was this disorder that 'plans that had been previously discussed, or even decided upon, had gone astray, amongst others the plan of the campaign of the two Armies of the Pyrenees! After a long and

[5] Stendhal, 'Vie de Napoléon,' p. 83.

fruitless search, it was eventually discovered in an anteroom, amongst all sorts of litter, at the back of a drawer in one of the messengers' tables.'[6]

In the same place they discovered a pressing question that had remained unanswered for three months, relative to the construction of a bridge over the Rhine for the passage of the army!

Monsieur de Pontécoulant made no secret of his perplexities and difficulties. One day he was discussing them at the Convention with Boissy d'Anglas, when the latter said:

'I met yesterday a General on half-pay. He has come back from the Army of Italy, and seemed to know all about it. He might give you some good advice.'

'Send him to me,' said De Pontécoulant.

Next day there came to his room on the sixth floor the leanest and most miserable-looking creature he had ever seen in his life—'a young man with a wan and livid complexion, bowed shoulders, and a weak and sickly appearance.'[7]

Boissy d'Anglas had told him that his friend was called General Bonaparte, but Monsieur de Pontécoulant could not remember this extraordinary name, but he thought that this being,

[6] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 149. (These are the exact words of Monsieur de Pontécoulant to Monsieur de Ségur.)

[7] Comte de Pontécoulant, 'Souvenirs,' t. i., p. 365.

notwithstanding his curious appearance, had good reasoning faculties.

'Write down all that you have told me; put it into the form of a memorandum, and bring it me,' he said.

A few days later, Monsieur de Pontécoulant, meeting Boissy d'Anglas, said to him:

'I have seen your man, but he seems to be mad. He has not been near me again.'

'The reason is that he thought you were laughing at him. He expected you would make him work with you.'

'That need not be a difficulty; tell him to come back to-morrow.'[8]

This conversation would seem to show that at that time Napoleon was not an unbounded intriguer. He had seen from Aubry what to expect from the men in power; he had talked to Pontécoulant, and decided that the Minister of War, who knew nothing about war, was incapable, and said to himself that the request for a memorandum was a 'polite way of getting rid of him';[9] and so he went back no more, for what was the good of writing reports that were only to find their way into corners of messengers' writing-tables?

However, yielding to the entreaties of Boissy

[8] Stendhal, 'Vie de Napoléon,' p. 84.

[9] De Ségur, t. i., p. 151.

d'Anglas, Bonaparte sketched in a few pages his ideas upon the Army of Italy. To satisfy his mind he carried his work to the office, left it there, and went away. After reading the memorandum written by Bonaparte, Pontécoulant, struck with the author's knowledge, and thinking that he was still waiting, sent for him. But he had not waited. Bonaparte returned next day.

After arguing upon the statements made in his report, the Minister said to him :

'Would you work with me ?'

'With pleasure,' replied the young man, seating himself at a table.

While Napoleon was rendering to Pontécoulant those services that history has recorded, the Minister interrogated his secretary, and asked what he could do for him. In the first place Napoleon asked to be reinstated in the artillery. Pontécoulant, Minister at the age himself of barely thirty, was in a position to see that a man might be fit to command a brigade at twenty-five. He went in search of Letourneur, who had charge of the *personnel* of the army, and laid before him the grievances of Bonaparte.

'Letourneur, less passionate than Aubry, but possessed of an even more limited mind, roughly answered that Bonaparte's pretensions were inadmissible ; that men older than he in that branch of the service, notably Carnot himself, were still

only captains, and that his ambition was too great.'[10]

Thus Bonaparte, after having distinguished himself on several occasions before the enemy, at the very moment when he had re-established order in the War Office, and had improvised the plan of campaign whereby the army occupied Vado, saw himself refused the post to which he had every right, simply because Letourneur, who since 1789 had preferred Parliamentary to any other battles, was still a captain of engineers at the age of forty-four. When, however, the latter succeeded Pontécoulant, and proposed to Bonaparte to continue his work in the War Office, Napoleon refused, and begged Pontécoulant to bring pressure to bear to obtain for him his mission to Turkey.

We think that an ordinarily ambitious man would have preferred to remain in the midst of all the political intrigues, of which there were plenty in the departments of the War Office.

[10] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 152; Stendhal, 'Vie de Napoléon,' p. 85.

XV.

Revenge and Gratitude of the Emperor—Recall of General Bonaparte—Madame Tallien procures him Cloth for a Coat—Bonaparte tells Madame Tallien her Fortune—First Meetings with Joséphine de Beauharnais.

Notwithstanding the injury Letourneur had done him, Napoleon bore him no grudge. The former Minister of the Convention saw his military career crowned, under the Empire, by a more pacific post as Councillor in the 'Cour des Comptes,' after having been Prefect of the Loire.

On the other hand, Napoleon, always grateful for services done him, never forgot the man who had appreciated and saved him from wretchedness.

Scarcely was he appointed Consul than he sent for Monsieur de Pontécoulant.

'You are a Senator,' he said, with the charming glance that always accompanied every free movement of his heart.

'The favour that you desire to show me is impossible,' answered De Pontécoulant. 'I am

only thirty-six, and one must be forty years of age to be a Senator.'

'Very well, you shall be Prefect of Brussels or of any other town that suits you better; remember that you are a Senator, and come and take your place when you are old enough. I wish to show that I have not forgotten what you did for me.'

Some years later, Monsieur de Pontécoulant, Senator, was living in Paris. He was imprudent enough to back a bill for one of his friends. The sum in question was 300,000 francs (£12,000); the friend could not pay, and the Senator found himself plunged into the most cruel difficulties. He was about to sell his only property (Pontécoulant, in the Department of Calvados).

'Why do you not go to the Emperor?' asked one of his friends. 'He is always specially kind to you.'

'I really dare not,' was the answer. 'It would be a great indiscretion, and he and I should both suffer.'

At length one day, very miserable at the necessity of selling his property, Monsieur de Pontécoulant asked for an audience of the Emperor, and told him all that had happened.

'How long have you been in these difficulties?' said Napoleon.

'Three months, sire.'

'Well, then, you have just wasted three months. Do you suppose I can forget what you did for

me? Go this very day to the treasurer of my civil list, and he will give you the money.'[1]

Bonaparte had not been able to go to Constantinople, in spite of Monsieur de Pontécoulant's protection. It happened, later on, that the latter was travelling abroad for pleasure, and wished to go there. The Emperor gave orders that his former protector should be everywhere received with the utmost distinction.[2]

As an antithesis to the gratitude of the Emperor, we owe it to truth to mention that at the sitting of June 22, 1815, Monsieur de Pontécoulant was the first to oppose the maintenance of the Empire.[3]

Having resigned his place in the War Office under Letourneur, Napoleon returned to his project of the mission to Turkey, and was supported by Pontécoulant. He thought himself certain of success; the decree was prepared, and he was presented at a meeting of the Committee of Public Safety. All was in order, and all was settled; the expenses of his journey, the delivery of the mathematical instruments, and of the books that the mission was to take with it.[4]

'There is no difficulty upon this point'

[1] Stendhal, 'Vie de Napoléon,' pp. 85-87. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Journal de l'Empire*, June 25, 1815—sitting of the 22nd, Chamber of Peers.

[4] War-Office Archives; Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. iii., p. 408.

(Napoleon's departure), write Daunou and Cambacérès, members of the Committee of Public Safety to the headquarters of both the artillery and the engineers, 'but what may perhaps deserve some attention is the demand made by General Bonaparte to take with him the heads of certain battalions of artillery, etc.' (here follow the names). '. . . Have the goodness to let us know your opinion respecting this demand.'

This passed at the meeting of the Committee of Public Safety on the 29 Fructidor.

We can only believe that in this Committee the left hand did not know what the right was doing, for the same day the same Committee, at the same meeting, drew up the following decision:

'*Committee of Public Safety.*

'Agreed that General-of-Brigade Bonaparte, formerly employed by the Committee of Public Safety, be struck off the list of general officers on active service, on account of his refusal to take up the post assigned to him.

'The ninth Commission is charged with the execution of this decision.

'29 Fructidor, year iii. of the Republic.

'CAMBACÉRÈS, BERLIER,
'MERLIN, BOISSY.'[5]

[5] National Archives; Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. iii., p. 73.

It must be added that on the 13 Fructidor, sixteen days previously, Napoleon's position had been perfectly regularized by the following order:

'*To General Canclaux, commanding the Army of the West.*

'General,

'Take notice that, on the 4th of this month, the Committee of Public Safety came to a decision, whereby it requires the services, to carry out work connected with the plan of campaign, of General-of-Brigade Bonaparte, destined to the army of which you are in command. I desire you, therefore, to appoint some person to take the place of this General Officer in the post destined for him, so that the good of the service may not suffer in his absence.

'*Idem.*—13 Fructidor, to inform Bonaparte and desire him to acknowledge receipt.

(Signed) 'Pille.'

As a matter of fact, he was deprived for not occupying a post of which he had been formally relieved, and which was no longer vacant.

This was the last irony of fate. There was some mistake. It did not seem difficult to obtain the revocation of the decree which took from him his rank, but for that purpose he must find people in a position to be listened to. He at once went in search of his protectors—Barras, Fréron, and

Marriette. The most important was Barras, in his capacity as member of the Committee of Public Safety.

His business was soon well started, for his recall was dated September 15, and on the 26th he writes to Joseph:

'There is more probability than ever of my journey. Indeed, it would be already decided upon were there not so much excitement here; but just now some upheavals are going on, and there are some very incendiary germs about. It will be settled in a few days.'

On the other hand, he considered himself as belonging to the army, as, according to Ouvrard's memoirs, 'a decision of the Committee of Public Safety, dated Fructidor, year iii., granted to officers on active service cloth sufficient for a uniform, coat, overcoat, waistcoat, and pair of breeches. Bonaparte, at that time General-of-Brigade of Artillery *à la suite*, demanded the benefits of this decree, but having no right to it, as he was not on active service, was refused. Madame Tallien gave him a letter for Monsieur Lefeuve, Commissioner of the 17th division, and a few days before the famous day of Vendémiaire the Commissioner acceded to Madame Tallien's request, and granted the cloth to Bonaparte.'[6]

He did not ask for this new cloth either out of

[6] J. G. Ouvrard, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 21.

vanity, nor from a love of mere display, for, says Baron Fain,[7] 'the uniform of General-of-Brigade that he still wears has seen fire more than once, and has had hard wear in bivouacs. The embroidery of his rank is represented thereon in military simplicity by a silk trimming known as "system."'

To gain anything from Barras, it was first of all necessary to be on terms with Madame Tallien. Napoleon's critical position compelled him, notwithstanding the shabbiness of his attire, to present himself at the house of the goddess of the day.

'It was shortly before the 13 Vendémiaire that Napoleon was presented to Madame Tallien. Of all those who composed her *salon* he was perhaps the least remarkable, and the least favoured by fortune. Often in the middle of most animated discussions little groups would form in the drawing-room, which would forget, in frivolous conversation, the grave interests with which they were too generally occupied. Bonaparte rarely mixed with these, but when he did it was with a sort of carelessness, and he then displayed a lively and vivacious humour. One evening he assumed the character and manner of a fortune-teller, seized Madame Tallien's hand, and poured out endless nonsense.'[8]

[7] 'Manuscrit de l'An iii.,' p. 373.

[8] J. G. Ouvrard, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 20.

What a picture it makes, worthy of the brush of a *genre* painter! The future conqueror of Europe, small and thin, his face hollow and pale, like parchment, as he said himself, long hair on either side of his forehead, the remainder of his hair unpowdered, tied into a queue behind, clothed in a threadbare uniform, reading the hand of her who was called 'the beautiful Notre Dame de Thermidor'; then in the full splendour of a beauty which it would be impossible to describe without difficulty, if we may judge by the following portrait left of her by Madame d'Abrantès:

'Her only head-dress was composed of her beautiful black hair curled about her head, not hanging down, but simply curled in the antique manner, like the busts one sees at the Vatican. This manner of doing her hair harmonized admirably with her perfect and regular style of beauty; it framed, like a border of ebony, her neck, which was round and polished like ivory; and her beautiful face, which was white and coloured without any apparent aid—a real Cadiz complexion. She wore no ornaments save an ample robe of muslin, which fell in large folds about her, and was made on the model of the tunic on a Greek statue. Only her robe was of the finest Indian muslin, and probably more gracefully made than those contrived by the dress-

makers of Aspasia and Poppæa. It was draped across the bosom, and the sleeves were looped back from the arms by buttons composed of antique cameos; on her shoulders, and at her waist also, were similar cameos. She wore no gloves. On one of her arms, which might have served as a model for the most beautiful of Canova's statues, she wore a gold snake enamelled with black, the head of which was composed of a superb emerald, so cut as to resemble the head of the reptile. She wore a magnificent cashmere shawl—a very rare luxury in France at that time—and she draped this shawl around her with an inimitable grace, in which there was no small amount of coquetry, for the crimson purple of the Indian stuff showed off the exquisite whiteness of her shoulders and arms. . . . When she smiled, which she did graciously, in acknowledgment of the many bows she received, she displayed two rows of brilliant pearls, which made many a woman jealous.'[9]

What a contrast between this radiant woman, overflowing with happiness, queen of all that is thoughtless in life, and the sickly officer, concealing with difficulty his poverty and his irritation against the ironies of fate! Ask yourself, also, what thoughts must have been boiling in the mind of that young General, caring for nothing

[9] 'Mémoires,' t. i.

but glory, at the moment when he was telling fortunes to gain a protector.

In a corner of the picture see this group of women, watching the scene. They laugh at the prophecies invented by Bonaparte on the spur of the moment, and at his melancholy attitude. See this dark-haired woman, this languishing beauty, full of indifference and listlessness; that is Beauharnais's widow. In five months she will be the wife of the soothsayer; in three years she will be quasi-sovereign of France; and not long afterwards the Pope will come to Paris to crown her Empress of the French.

Bonaparte, in spite of his penetration, could not read all that in Madame Tallien's hand, and it would have vastly amused his audience could he have foretold it.

Between September 15, date of his disgrace, and the 13 Vendémiaire (October 5), he devoted a great portion of his time to Monsieur Permon, who was very ill. He went there every day, frequently staying to dinner. He gave his friends the greatest marks of attachment.

'I remember how one evening,' says the Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'my father being very ill, my mother was weeping and in despair. It was ten o'clock at night, and at that period it was impossible to induce one of the servants to leave the house after nine o'clock. Bonaparte said

nothing. He ran downstairs, and went in search of Monsieur Duchannois, the doctor, whom he brought back with him in spite of the difficulties he made. The weather was dreadful, and it was pouring with rain. Bonaparte had been unable to find a cab to take him to the doctor's house, and his coat was wet through.'[10]

[10] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 277.

XVI.

The 13 Vendémiaire—Three Minutes for Reflection—Rules of French Patriotism—Adjutant to Commander-in-Chief Barras—Victory—The Name of Bonaparte emerges from Obscurity.

Meanwhile a revolution was smouldering in Paris.

The Convention had promulgated the additional articles to the Constitution of the year iii., whereby the two councils—the Five Hundred and the Ancients—were to recruit their numbers by two-thirds from their own body, leaving only one-third to the election of the people. This restriction was made a pretext by agitators, who were supported by the Royalists. The united Sections threatened to march against the Convention and to dissolve it.

On the 12 Vendémiaire, General Menou, Commander-in-Chief in Paris, failed to put down the rioters. Indeed, he argued with them, and, after a sort of capitulation, the army withdrew, while the Sections kept their positions.

At this news the Convention felt that all was lost, and believed itself betrayed by the army. Menou was arrested; Generals Desperrières, Debor, and Duhoux cashiered. However, time pressed, a new General was necessary, and, moreover, that very night. The cause had become so personal to the members of the Convention, that they would not consent to yield the command to a stranger. They must have a representative to undertake it, and all eyes turned to the General of the 9 Thermidor. Representative Barras was therefore invested with the supreme command.[1]

Barras, whose anti-military tastes and luxurious and voluptuous life were but little in harmony with his new duties,[2] found himself placed in a position of great embarrassment by the state of extreme confusion that existed in the army, and confided his troubles to Carnot, who advised him to associate a General with himself.

'But which of them?' asked Barras.

Carnot laid before him the names of Brune, Verdières, and Bonaparte.

'No,' answered Barras, 'we don't want field generals here; we must have an artilleryman.'

Thereupon Fréron, who was desperately in love with Pauline, insisted upon Bonaparte being chosen, and straightway brought him to Barras.

[1] Baron Fain, 'Manuscrit de l'An iii.,' p. 350.

[2] Marmont, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 84.

As soon as the latter saw Napoleon he took him aside, and offered him the second command in the Army of the Convention. Receiving no immediate answer, Barras said:

'I give you three minutes to think it over.'

They both remained standing in absolute silence.[3]

Three minutes, and the fate of Napoleon, of France, and of Europe would be sealed.

During those three minutes Napoleon entered into himself, and asked where lay his duty. He might well doubt, for to upset the Convention, now associated with terror and carnage, to drive out the envious and incapable men from whom he had suffered so much, was not without charms for him, and such was the programme of the Sections.

He was about to decline the command, when, looking at all the consequences of the situation, he saw in his mind's eye the Austrians with 50,000 men at the gates of Strasburg ready to attack, and the English with forty vessels off Brest.[4]

Then he hesitated no longer; his mind was made up, and he grasped the principle which is the basis of universal patriotism. When the country is threatened, it is the duty of all citizens

[3] De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 163.

[4] Stendhal, 'Vie de Napoléon,' p. 97.

to rally round those who are the Government for the time being.

This patriotic sentiment, which induced him to serve those whom he detested, is the same as that which, in 1815, after his defeat at Waterloo, after his abdication, drove him to humiliate himself before the traitors of the Provisional Government, and to plead for the favour of being allowed to command once more, because he thought a chance still existed of being able to beat the invaders, in whose plans for the investment of Paris he had discovered a serious omission.[5]

Strong in his decision, he said to Barras :

'I accept, but I warn you that, once my sword is out of the scabbard, I shall not replace it till I have established order.'

This scene occurred on the 13 Vendémiaire, at one o'clock in the morning. Without the loss of an instant, Bonaparte went to visit Menou in prison, obtained from him the principal information, and took all the measures that, in a few hours, ensured the success of the day. That evening Barras could appear before the Assembly, and announce the victory of the troops of the Convention.[6]

Next day, 14 Vendémiaire, Napoleon was

[5] General Petiet, 'Souvenirs Militaires de l'Histoire Contemporaine,' p. 233.

[6] Baron Fain, 'Manuscrit de l'An iii.,' p. 366.

promoted to the rank of General of Division, and on the 18th his name was finally pronounced at the Convention in a public sitting.

'Do not forget,' said Fréron, 'that General Bonaparte, appointed during the night of the 12th, had only the morning of the 13th to make those arrangements, of which you have seen the effects.'

Barras followed Fréron, and called the attention of his colleagues to the services of his Lieutenant, and obtained the decree confirming him in the post of second-in-command of the Army of the Interior.

From the tribune Bonaparte's name soon passed to the newspapers, and thenceforward it emerged from the obscurity which had enveloped it.[7]

On October 26 he was definitely appointed General-in-Chief of the Army of the Interior, and took up his abode at the headquarters in the Rue des Capucines. He took General Duvigneau for Chief of the Staff; his aides-de-camp were Junot and Lemarois, to whom a few days later he added Marmont and Louis. As his uncle Fesch, for whom he reserved the post of secretary, had not yet arrived, he made use of the secretary of the representatives charged with the direction of armed forces. The same secretary, Fain, transported to Saint-Cloud with

[7] Baron Fain, 'Manuscrit de l'An iii.,' p. 372.

the minority of the Directory, afterwards wrote the first orders of Bonaparte as First Consul, and, by a curious fatality, after an interval of fourteen years, Fain found himself once more at Fontainebleau to copy the last orders of the Emperor and his abdication ![8]

[8] Baron Fain, 'Manuscrit de l'An iii.,' p. 374.

XVII.

Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Paris—His First Thought is for his Family—Modesty—Sends Money to his Mother.

ONCE installed at the headquarters, Napoleon became a personage of importance. The poverty of the previous days had given place to a luxurious household. No more dirty boots, so disturbing to Madame Permon ; now he only went out in a magnificent carriage.

Did this unexpected, instantaneous fortune, which suddenly changed a disgraced General into one of the most important people in France, spoil his character or his affections ? Read his letters ; listen to the accounts of his contemporaries. His first act was to intercede for, and gain the acquittal of, Menou, his predecessor. He proceeded to disarm the Sections, 'and all that in his orders seems rigorous ceases to be so in his actions,' says Baron Fain, confirmed by De Ségur.

In the evening of the 14th he hastened to Monsieur Permon's, whose illness had alarmingly increased, and, says the Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'he

showed absolute devotion to my mother in these moments of sorrow. His own circumstances were such that all interests might pale before them, but he was like a son—a brother.'[1]

Farther on the same writer adds: 'He came to see us every day just as kindly and naturally as before. Bonaparte was of the greatest help to us then. I can affirm, for he associated me in his good work, that at that time he saved more than a hundred families from death. He caused distributions of food and wood to be made at different houses.'[2]

What kindness also to his own family! See how modestly he announces the late events to them.

During the night of the 13 Vendémiaire (October 5) he writes thus to his brother Joseph:

'At last all is finished, and my first thought is to send you news of myself. The Royalists, formed into Sections, were becoming daily more threatening. The Convention gave orders for the disarmament of the Lepelletier Section, which resisted the troops. Menou, who commanded, was, it was said, a traitor, and was immediately disgraced. The Convention appointed Barras to command the armed forces; the Committees named

[1] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 285.

[2] *Ibid.*, t. i., pp. 288, 289; De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., . 171.

me to command them under him. We have placed our troops; the enemy came to attack us at the Tuileries. We killed many of them, and lost thirty killed and sixty wounded of our men. We have disarmed the Sections, and all is peace again. As usual, I am unhurt.

'P.S.—Fortune is on my side. Love to Eugénie and Julie.'[3]

October 19.—'You will have learned from the newspapers all that concerns me. I have been named, by decree, Commander in the second place of the Army of the Interior. Barras is named Commander-in-Chief; we have conquered, and all is forgotten.'

'A certain citizen, Billon, who I am assured is an acquaintance of yours, asks for the hand of Paulette. This citizen has no fortune, and I have written to mamma that it must not be entertained. I will get further information to-day.'

'Lucien is War Commissioner with the Army of the Rhine. Louis is with me; he is writing to you, I believe.'

'If you do not wish to be a consul, come here; you shall choose the place that suits you best.'

'The multiplicity of my business, and the importance of matters that keep me employed, do not permit me to write to you often. I am

[3] 'Mémoires du Roi Joseph,' t. i., p. 154; Eugénie and Julie, the sisters Clary.

quite happy and contented here. I have sent the family between 50,000 and 60,000 francs in silver, assignats, and paper (£2,500). You need not, therefore, be uneasy about them. I am still very pleased with Louis; he is my Captain aide-de-camp. Marmont and Junot are my two Major aides-de-camp. Jerôme is at college, where he is learning mathematics, Latin, drawing, etc.

'I see no objection to Paulette's marriage if he be rich.'

It is clear that, in spite of the enormous material transformation that has come to him in one day, no intoxication has touched his moral nature. As he was yesterday, such we find him to-day.

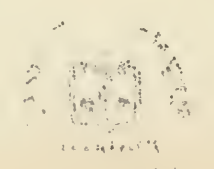
XVIII.

In the Drawing-rooms of the Capital—With Barras—New Meeting with Joséphine—Matrimonial Monomania—Falsity of a Legend—Joséphine attracts Bonaparte to her House.

His new position imposed worldly duties upon him. Splendid in his new rank, and with the prestige of the victory of the 13 Vendémiaire, he made a triumphal entry into those drawing-rooms where hitherto, small and humble, remarkable only on account of his needy appearance, he used to come and try to please the guests and friends of his protectors.

On account of his official functions, he was often obliged to dine with members of the Government. Sometimes he dined with La Réveillère-Lépeaux and 'the Citizen Director, and his wife always spoke with the utmost enthusiasm of their little General, as they called him.'[1]

[1] Besnard, 'Souvenirs d'un Nonagénaire,' t. ii., p. 112.



More often he went to Barras's, whose house was very brilliant and always crowded. 'The master of the house was fond of society; he liked conversation, but preferred cards. Enormous sums were played for at his house; it was the only tolerable manner of getting through an evening for people who could not, or would not, talk. Every table was covered with high stakes, which were fought for at whist, vingt-et-un, faro, bouillotte, or even creps.'[2]

Napoleon never joined these parties, in which money played such an important part. He drew nearer to the circle of ladies, among whom Madame Tallien was the Queen, both by her beauty and by the influence she obtained from her very slightly-disguised intimacy with Barras.

It was in Madame Tallien's society that Napoleon again met Joséphine de Beauharnais, and that 'he fell in love with her, in the fullest sense of the word, in all the force of its fullest acceptation,' says an eye-witness, adding: 'To judge by appearances, it was his first passion, and he felt it with all the energy of his character. He was twenty-six, she more than thirty-two. Although she had lost all her freshness, she had discovered how to please him, and one knows that in love the why is superfluous. One loves because one

[2] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Les Salons de Paris,' t. iii., p. 193. 'Creps' was a game played with dice.—*Translator.*



loves, and nothing is less susceptible of analysis than this sentiment.'[3]

Joséphine was not so faded as the severe Marmont says. Without possessing the startling beauty of Madame Tallien, it was easy for Madame de Beauharnais to awake feelings of love, especially in the heart of a young man who, until then, had never loved.

Joséphine was of medium height, and perfectly proportioned. All her movements had a kind of undulating suppleness, which naturally fell into careless attitudes, and imparted to all her person a sort of exotic languor. Her pale complexion, which gleamed like thin sheets of ivory, became slightly animated under the softened reflections of large deep-blue eyes, with long lashes slightly curled. Her hair, of a shade of chestnut, with a wonderful sheen on it, escaped in small curls from a net fastened over it with a gold clasp, and the wayward locks added an indefinable charm to a countenance whose mobility was excessive, but always attractive.

Her toilet contributed still further to heighten the ethereal appearance of her person. Her gown was of Indian muslin, and its exaggerated amplitude fell around her body in cloud-like folds. The bodice, draped in large pleats across the bosom, was fastened at the shoulders by two

[3] Marmont, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 185.

lions' heads enamelled in black. The sleeves were short, and puckered over very beautiful arms, ornamented at the wrists with two little golden buckles.[4]

Faithful to their programme, which consists in ascribing none but unacknowledgable motives to all Napoleon's actions and sentiments, his detractors have not failed to say that his love for Joséphine had but one object—to obtain the chief command of the Army of Italy.

We may, however, regard the matter in a more simple light, and conclude that, like many other young men of that period, Napoleòn suffered to a certain extent from matrimonial monomania.

Since 1794 marriage had been the one idea in his mind, whereof he gave the first token by exclaiming to Bourrienne: 'What a lucky rascal Joseph is!' followed very soon after by his desire to marry Désirée Clary. What advantages did he anticipate from a marriage with a soap-boiler's daughter? Will it be said that at the moment when he most wished for the union his own position was not brilliant? We willingly concede the point, but it must be borne in mind that he was then employed by the Committee of Public Safety, focus of all intrigues.

[4] 'Mémoires et Correspondance de l'Impératrice Joséphine,' *passim*, Paris, Plancher, 1820; Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Les Salons de Paris,' t. v., p. 65.

What ambitious objects can he have had in view when, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Paris, he sought Madame Permon in marriage, although she was a widow with two children?[5]

Refused by Mdlle. Clary, bowed out by Madame Permon, he married the first attractive woman who condescended to listen to him. Of course, he had every prospect of being heard by Madame de Beauharnais, who, in spite of her widowhood and her two children, was entirely given up to a worldly existence, and who, tempted by every pleasure, did not hesitate to compromise her dignity by a public intimacy with Madame Tallien, and by frequenting Barras's house, where she had to meet all sorts of people.

In short, a well-bred woman, enjoying that kind of life, had need to lean upon the strong arm of a coming man. She clearly could not have made a better choice than when she fixed upon the brave soldier who, by a surprising success, had become the principal General and the saviour of the Republic.

In any case, she wished to be sheltered thenceforward from the difficult situation into which a lone woman is plunged in times of political trouble—a situation which, in 1794, had compelled her to write as follows to an obscure member of the Committee of Public Safety:

[5] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 302.

'My household is a Republican household. Before the Revolution my children could not be distinguished from *sans-culottes*, and I hope that they will grow up worthy of the Republic. I write to you frankly as a *sans-culotte* of the Mountain.'[6]

Having once cast her eyes upon Napoleon, Joséphine would lose no time. Here is a note addressed by her to Bonaparte on October 28, 1795:

'You no longer come to see a friend who loves you. You have altogether neglected her; you are wrong, for she is deeply attached to you.

'Come to-morrow, *Septidi*,[7] to luncheon with me. I want to see you, and to talk to you about your interests.

'Good-night, my friend; I embrace you.

'WIDOW BEAUHARNAIS.

'6 Brumaire.'[8]

From these few lines it is clear that Bonaparte did not importune Joséphine with his visits with the view of obtaining her protection, and that,

[6] Autograph letter from Joséphine to Vadier, member of the Committee of Public Safety, Paris, 28 Nivose, year ii.'—Charavay Collection, No. 256, 1860, p. 282.

[7] Seventh day of the Republican decade, or period of ten days, which took the place of the week.—*Translator.*

[8] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 433.

on the contrary, it was Madame de Beauharnais who, by talking of Napoleon's interests, sought to attract him to her house.

This letter, and the anterior meetings between Bonaparte and Joséphine, necessarily weaken the poetic legend of Napoleon's first relations with the widow—relations that some have tried to date from a dramatic scene, in which Eugène, in despair, appears to have come to ask for his father's sword, when the Sections were disarmed, after Vendémiaire. A further proof of what we allege has been given us by a friend of Joséphine's —J. C. Bailleul—who says: 'I never heard any mention of this anecdote at the time, and the marriage was already concluded when people learned the news of it.'[9]

[9] J. C. Bailleul, 'Études sur les Causes de l'Elévation de Napoléon,' Paris, 1834, t. i., p. 136.

XIX.

Joséphine makes a Marriage of Reason—Napoleon madly in Love, disinterested, and sincere—Purchase of the House in the Rue Chantereine—Joséphine too deeply engaged to back out.

Was Joséphine ever the mistress of Barras? Some of our contemporaries affirm that she was. Their knowledge upon this point is as retrospective as it is categorical. But yet it seems very strange that Madame Tallien should have brought to Barras's house a second mistress, who was her intimate friend, when she had so many motives for keeping to herself the favours of the omnipotent Director! Is not that presumption of sufficient weight to counterbalance the pretended secrets that have been revealed in memoirs that should be read with caution, and in which, without proof, the bare fact is affirmed?

Supposing Joséphine, before marrying Bonaparte, wished to secure for her future husband, either by herself or through the medium of Madame Tallien, any favours from the Directory;

supposing, even, that she suggested that the command of the Army of Italy would be a very suitable post for him, what is there surprising in that? What more natural on the part of a woman on the point of contracting a marriage of reason, which promised her much personal comfort, but from which the heart was entirely excluded?

It must be admitted that Joséphine married Napoleon without having the smallest spark of love for him. She confesses this in a letter to one of her women friends:

'You have seen General Bonaparte at my house. Well, it is he who is good enough to act as stepfather to the orphans of Alexander de Beauharnais, as husband to his widow! Do you love him? you ask me. No . . . I do not.—Then you dislike him? No; but my state is one of tepidity towards him that is displeasing to me, and which, from a religious point of view, would shock the goody people more than anything else.'[1]

If either of the future couple is intriguing for the command in Italy, it certainly is not Napoleon; it is not even at his instigation that the steps are taken. Read the continuation of Joséphine's letter:

[1] Letter of Joséphine; De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. ii., p. 347; Jung, 'Bonaparte et son Temps,' t. iii., p. 117.

'Barras assures me that if I marry the General he will obtain for him the command in Italy. Yesterday Bonaparte was talking to me about this favour, which is already causing some of his brothers-in-arms to grumble, although it has not yet been granted. "Do they imagine," he said, "that I need protection in order to rise? They will only be too glad when I accord them mine. My sword is by my side, and with that I will do anything."'

This magnificent assurance makes Joséphine uneasy; she wavers between her 'tepidity' for Bonaparte and the brilliant future that she may dream of. Her indecision thus makes itself felt at the end of her letter: 'I do not know how it is, but sometimes this ridiculous assurance gains upon me to such an extent as to make me believe possible all that this man suggests to me; and, with his imagination, who can tell what he may not attempt?'

No doubt the seductive looks of the beautiful creole would have been more than enough to subjugate the heart of the young General, but we may, nevertheless, suppose that the friend of Madame de Tallien was well versed in all the arts of coquetry, and that she showed Napoleon a different side of her character to that which she expressed so naturally to her friend. We may judge of that by these lines written by

Napoleon during the engagement: 'I wake up with my mind full of you. Your portrait, and the intoxicating evening of yesterday, allowed no rest to my senses. Sweet and incomparable Joséphine, what is this curious effect you have upon my heart? If you are angry, sad, or ill at ease, my heart is broken, and I have no rest; but can I have any when, giving myself up to the profound sentiment that governs me, I draw from your lips, from your heart, a flame that scorches me? Ah! it was last night that I perceived indeed that your portrait is not you. You start at noon; I shall see you in three hours. Meanwhile, *mio dolce amor*, a million kisses; but give me none, for they set my blood on fire.'[2]

The evening that preceded this letter was not passed with a block of marble! If Joséphine concealed from Napoleon her real feelings, it was because she had a real interest in marrying him while he was genuinely in love, and he long preserved that violent, impetuous love. The same excitement, the same fire, are to be found in the General at the height of his renown. There was, therefore, no calculation upon his side, but passion in all its intensity, in all its sincerity. It was years before he discovered

[2] Letter from Napoleon to Joséphine; De Coston, t. i., p. 436; Jung, t. iii., p. 122.

that he had been but a means in the thoughts of Joséphine, and not the only object; and by the time that she, seeing all the world at her husband's feet, came to love him as he would always have wished to be loved, the spell had long been broken by many violent domestic storms, which would have carried away the love of more than one husband.

Apparently, it was after the luncheon of *Septidi*, 7 Brumaire, to which Joséphine had invited him in her note—that is to say, in November, 1795—that Napoleon really began to make love to Madame Beauharnais. She at that time lived in the Rue de l'Université, almost opposite the Rue de Poitiers,[3] with her aunt, Fanny de Beauharnais, of whom the poet Lebrun said:

> 'Fanny belle et poète, a deux petits travers;
> Elle fait son visage, et ne fait pas ses vers.'[4]

The cares of his office, and the work rendered necessary by the elaboration of a plan of attack intended for the Army of Italy (a plan which had been required of him by the Directory), probably did not allow Napoleon to see much of Joséphine, for it was not till January, 1796, that the proposal of marriage was made and

[3] 'Memoirs of Mademoiselle Avrillon,' t. i., p. 145.

[4] 'Fanny, beautiful poetess, has two small defects;
She makes up her face, and not her verses.'

accepted. It was then that Joséphine and her aunt moved into the little house — 6, Rue Chantereine—bought by private deed for 6,400 francs (£256), paid on account to Julie Carreau, wife of Talma, owner of the house. This purchase was not concluded till 1798, as will be seen from the deed itself.[5]

We have desired to reproduce this little-known deed, so as to prove irrefutably that the house in the Rue Chantereine never belonged to Joséphine, although she lived in it before her marriage. This is confirmed by Lucien in his memoirs.[6]

It was not, therefore, as people have said (what have they not said?), the attraction of sharing a luxurious and comfortable house that had guided Napoleon in his marriage.

The engagement was soon announced, and Napoleon, proud of his conquest, paid visits with his *fiancée*. She, still in doubt, made an excuse one day to go and see her lawyer, Maître Raguideau, and begged her future husband to wait for her outside. The lawyer's advice was not calculated to break down Joséphine's irresolution.

'What!' said the man of business, 'marry a man with nothing but his sword and his uniform —who owns at most a little house! An unknown General, without a name, without a future,

[5] See note at the end of Book I., p. 154.

[6] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. i., p. 164.

below all the great generals of the Republic! Much better marry a shopkeeper!'[7]

Marry a shopkeeper! The advice was practical, but perhaps tradesmen were less inflammable than the young General with nothing but his uniform and his sword.

Napoleon, through a door that was ajar, heard this disagreeable conversation; he held his tongue, and never said a word about it. He had his revenge eight years later, when he sent for Raguideau to the Tuileries, the day before his coronation, and gave him a front place in Notre-Dame, so that he should be able to see clearly to what the little General with no future had brought his client.

Poor Joséphine was too deeply engaged to profit by her lawyer's advice, for Napoleon showered upon her in public the proofs of the deepest attachment, which no one could fail to see, and which made a rupture difficult.

[7] De Coston, t. i., p. 439; De Ségur, t. i., p. 177; Duchesse d'Abrantès; Bourrienne, t. vi., p. 237.

XX.

Marriage—Joséphine's Portion—Barras could not dispose of the Command in Italy—A Two Days' Honeymoon—Departure for the Army of Italy—Study of the Man invested with the Supreme Command.

Bonaparte was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Italy on February 23, and the marriage was fixed for March 9, 1796, the eve of a *Décadi.*[1]

The civil marriage was celebrated at ten o'clock at night before Monsieur Leclerq, officer of the *état civil* of the second arrondissement.[2] Napoleon had to wake up the unlucky Mayor, who had gone to sleep. On the official papers, Joséphine, by a not unnatural piece of vanity, had reduced her age by four years; Bonaparte, on his side, as a delicate attention to his wife, had added one to his age. The witnesses were, on Joséphine's side, Barras and Tallien; and on Bonaparte's, Le Marois, aide-de-camp, and Calmelet, lawyer.

[1] Tenth and last day of the decade in the Republican calendar: the day of rest in place of the Sunday.—*Translator.*

[2] 'Memoirs of Prince Eugène,' t. i., p. 33.

After the registers had been signed, the newly-married couple returned to the Rue Chantereine, where they found themselves alone, Joséphine's two children—Eugène and Hortense—having been sent to school at Saint-Germain a few days previously.

'The Commandership-in-Chief of the Army of Italy was the dower presented to Joséphine by Barras.' Such is the formula used by most historians.

But the worst of it is that this story, though piquant, is not true. Not only does it appear monstrous that, at any period, a man should dispose so lightly of a command upon which depended so many grave and sacred interests, but facts themselves give the lie to the assertion.

In the first place, albeit he was in a position to dispose of many favours, he had absolutely no power to dispose of the command of the Army of Italy. The holder of the post could only be appointed by a majority of the Directory, composed at that time of Carnot, Barras, La Réveillère-Lépeaux, Rewbell, and Letourneur.

On this point we have decisive evidence. In his memoirs, which, taken as a whole, are hostile to Napoleon, La Réveillère-Lépeaux writes:

'It has been said that his marriage with the widow Beauharnais had been a condition without which he would never have obtained a command

that was the object of his most earnest desires; it is not the case. I can affirm that, in the choice made by the Directory, they were influenced neither by Barras nor by anyone else.'[3]

How, then, had Bonaparte been put forward as a candidate for this command? By the logic of things and events. We have said that on January 19 the young General had sent in a plan for the invasion of Piedmont. This plan was handed to Schérer, Commander-in-Chief, who read and passed it on to the Directory, with the opinion that its author was mad, and that he who drew it up ought to be compelled to carry it out.[4]

The Directory, much embarrassed, took counsel together, and Carnot proposed to replace Schérer by Bonaparte. 'It was I myself who, in 1799, proposed Bonaparte for the command of the Army of Italy.'[5]

Letourneur inclined to Bernadotte, Rewbell to Championnet, while La Réveillère-Lépeaux, Carnot, and Barras pronounced themselves in favour of Bonaparte; and so it came about that, owing to Schérer's incompetence, he who had conceived the plan of the campaign of the Army of Italy was the one to execute it.

[3] 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 24.

[4] Marmont, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 93.

[5] Carnot's answer to the report made by J. C. Bailleul respecting the conspiracy of Fructidor, Hamburg, 1799.

As a matter of fact, Napoleon owed his success neither to his marriage nor to Barras, but to 'Carnot's recognized skill in military matters, and the fact that he appreciated Napoleon's plan, and influenced the majority of the Directory.'[6]

Two days after his marriage, on March 11, 1796, Napoleon started post with Junot, his aide-de-camp, and Chauvet, War Commissioner, for the headquarters of the Army of Italy. He tore himself away from the woman he loved so dearly to begin that career of military prodigies uninterrupted during nearly twenty years.

According to Bossuet's expression: 'In his bold leaps and light movements he resembles some vigorous, bounding animal, that neither mountains nor precipices can arrest; and to put a term to his giddy course along the road to glory required the formidable coalition of the whole of Europe, backed up by the vilest treason.'

This supreme command that he bears with him to Italy will never leave his hands. Commander-in-Chief, Consul, or Emperor, henceforward, on a field more or less vast, he will never cease to hold the same place, to be invested with the same supremacy.

[6] Jomini, 'Vie Politique et Littéraire de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 67.

NOTE.

Deed of Sale of No. 6, Rue Chantereine.

Extrait des Registres de l'Enregistrement des Actes Civils, 2e Bureau, Vol. 33, fo. 5, vo., cases 5 et 6. M. Camessat, receveur.

Du onze germinal, an 6, enregistré vente par Louise-Julie Carreau, femme séparée de François-Joseph Talma, demeurant, savoir ; ledit Talma, rue de la Loi, et elle, rue de Matignon, faubourg Honoré, No. 2.

A Napoline (*sic*) Buonaparte, Président de la Légation Française au congrès de Rastadt, demeurant rue de la Victoire, No. 6.

D'une maison, susdite rue de la Victoire, ci-devant rue Chantereine, même numéro, appartenant à ladite citoyenne Talma, comme l'ayant acquise devant Rouen, notaire, le 6 Décembre, 1781, insinué le 6 Février suivant, moyennant 52,400 francs.

Passé devant maître Raguideau, notaire à Paris, le 6 germinal, an vi. Reçu deux mille, quatre-vingt-seize francs (2,096 francs).

Dudit, enregistré, intervention de Charles Louis Perdrix, homme de loi, rue Honoré, No. 67, qui se rend caution de ladite citoyenne Talma envers le citoyen Buonaparte pour raison des six mille quatre cents francs qui ont été payés à valoir sur le prix de ladite vente.

Devant, *idem*, reçu trente-deux francs (32 francs).

Pour extrait certifié conforme, l'archiviste de l'enregistrement

Renars.

Paris, le 20 Juillet, 1839.

Un bon pour la signature de M. Renars, archiviste.

Le Directeur de l'enregistrement du département de la Seine.

D'Hochereau.

Vu par nous, pair de France, préfet de la Seine, pour légalisation de la signature de M. D'Hochereau.

Paris, le 26 Juillet, 1839.

Pour le pair de France, préfet, et par autorisation,
Le maître des requêtes, secrétaire général.

L. de Jussieu.

BOOK II.

HUSBAND AND FATHER

I.

Conjugal Duty—Joséphine's Indifference—Her Wish to remain in Paris—Napoleon's Vain Entreaties.

Elementary morals, simple morals — morals as they were, no doubt, taught at Ajaccio —order a man who marries, first, to love his wife, and, secondly, to make himself loved by her.

When he married Napoleon had had no youth. In his inexperience he displayed a degree of excitement that was ill understood by Joséphine. Notwithstanding the verdict of those who, in his marriage, will only see the perverted calculations of a boundless ambition, the union was, as a matter of fact, only the romance of a simple young man, anxious to be married, carried away by the charms of a creole coquette, whose age he never considered.

At home he exaggerated the sentiments he had expressed many times in his letters, thinking that the best way to prove that he deserved the

love of his wife. To bring about that result he hesitated at nothing — oaths, prayers, praises, humility. Such was the state of mind with which Napoleon embarked upon the marriage state, and it rested with Joséphine to fix for ever the love of her husband.

Their honeymoon lasted only two days, after which he started for Italy. We can follow, in his letters, the state of his mind from that time forward. Having started on March 11, 1796, he wrote to her on the 14th, while changing horses at Chanceaux :

'I wrote to you from Châtillon, and have sent you a signed order, which will enable you to draw out certain money owing to me.

'Every instant takes me farther from you, adorable creature, and every instant I feel less that I can bear being separated from you. You are perpetually in my thoughts ; I rack my brains to imagine what you are about. If I think you are sad, my heart feels broken ; if I fancy you gay, laughing with your friends, I reproach you for having forgotten our grievous separation of three days ago.

'If I am asked whether I have slept well, I feel that, before answering, I ought to receive news from you as to whether you have had a good night. Sickness, man's fury, affect me not, except by the idea that they may come upon you.

May my good genius, who has always protected me amidst the greatest dangers, surround and cover you, and I will remain unarmed. Ah! be not gay, but rather somewhat melancholy, and, above all, may your soul be exempt from grief as your body from illness; you know what our good Ossian says on that subject.

'Write to me, my dearest friend, and at great length, moreover, and accept a thousand kisses from your true and tender love.'

It is curious to observe that this letter is addressed to '*Citoyenne Beauharnais*, 6, *Rue Chantereine*, *Paris*.'[1]

We may remark in this letter that, under the most passionate sentiments, there seems to be a sort of vague uneasiness lest he should not be loved as much as he loves. Have the two days which have followed the marriage been sufficient to plant in Napoleon's soul the troublesome doubt which will never quit him again during that marvellous campaign in Italy?

'General Bonaparte, however taken up he might be with his position, with the matters entrusted to him, and with his future, had yet time to give himself up to thoughts of another kind. He was thinking constantly of his wife. He longed for her, and watched for her coming with impatience. He often spoke to me of her

[1] De Coston, 'Premières Années de Napoléon,' t. i., p. 449.

and his love, with the expansion and the illusions of a very young man. The continual delays that she interposed before her departure were torture to him, and he occasionally gave way to fits of jealousy and to a kind of superstition, which was strong in his nature. One day the glass of Joséphine's portrait, which he always wore about him, broke, and he turned dreadfully pale.

'"Marmont!" he exclaimed, "either my wife is ill or unfaithful."'[2]

The truth is, that since his arrival in Italy, seeing that he was pursuing a victorious march, he wrote letter after letter to his wife, imploring her to come and join him. But she, before anything else, wished to remain free in Paris, for she had married less out of love for Bonaparte than for the exalted rank that he gained for her in society. Each victory gained by her husband heightened her position, and she wished less and less to quit the one place in which she found all the satisfaction that her vanity had sought above everything else in marriage.

'It was in Paris,' says Arnault, in his 'Souvenirs d'un Sexagénaire,' 'that she liked to enjoy the glory and the acclamations that greeted her at the news of every fresh victory from the

[2] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 188; De Ségur, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 248.

Army of Italy.' She triumphed when the Parisians, crowding to admire the Austrian flags and trophies that had arrived in Paris, saluted, and called her 'our Lady of Victory' as she drove past.[3]

These ovations, due to the success of her husband, were delightful to Joséphine. Therefore she desired to stay in Paris, in spite of the most passionate entreaties, which only drew from her this vulgar and unseemly expression: 'What an odd creature Bonaparte is!'[4]

Her indifference was noticed by all who approached her; she took no pains to hide it.

One day she asked a friend to dinner, who naturally questioned her respecting her late marriage and her young husband.

'I believe Bonaparte to be a very brave man,' she said negligently.

In relating these words that he himself had heard, Bailleul adds:

'All that was neither very sentimental nor very romantic. It is very different to that other pretty little story (Eugène at the disarmament of the Sections). The displeasure she showed during the conversation makes it clear also that she either sent no answers to his passionate

[3] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 48.

[4] Arnault, 'Souvenirs d'un Sexagénaire,' t. ii., p. 292.

letters, or else only two or three indifferent lines.'[5]

And also we think the various pretexts that she invented for delaying her departure, now pretending to be ill, now alleging symptoms of pregnancy, are explained.

He during this time, full of love, wrote from Tortona on June 15:

'My life is a perpetual nightmare. A horrible presentiment prevents me from breathing. I live no more; I have lost more than life, more than happiness, more than rest. I am almost without hope. I send you a courier. He will only remain four hours in Paris, and will bring me your answer.

'Write me ten pages; that alone may console me a little. You are ill, you love me, I have afflicted you, you are enceinte, and I cannot see you. I have sinned so much against you that I know not how to expiate my crimes. I accuse you of remaining in Paris, and you are ill there. Forgive me, my dearest; the love with which you have inspired me has taken away my reason. I shall never find it again.

'One does not recover from that illness. My presentiments are so gloomy that I should be satisfied if I could see you, press you to my heart

[5] Bailleul, 'Étude sur les Causes de l'Élévation de Napoléon I.,' t. i., p. 138; Paris, 1834.

for two hours, and die with you. Who takes care of you? I imagine you have sent for Hortense; I am a great deal fonder of that dear child now that I fancy she can console you. For me no consolation, no rest, no hope, is possible, until I receive the courier whom I have despatched to you, and that, in a long letter, you explain to me what is your illness, and to what point it is serious. If it be dangerous, I warn you I shall start at once for Paris. . . . I have always been fortunate—my fate has never resisted my will—and to-day I am struck in what touches me most closely. Without appetite, without sleep, indifferent to friends, glory, and country—you, you alone—the rest of the world no more exists for me than if it were annihilated. I care for honour because you care for it, for victory because it gives you pleasure, otherwise I should have quitted all to throw myself at your feet. My darling, mind you tell me that you are convinced that I love you more than it is possible to imagine; that you are persuaded that every moment of my time is consecrated to you; that never an hour passes without my thinking of you; that the idea of another woman has never occurred to me; that in my eyes they are all without charm, beauty, or wit; that you, and you alone, such as I see you now, can please me, and absorb all the faculties of my soul; that you

have sounded all its depths; that it has no dark corners hidden from you, no thoughts not subject to you; that my strength, my arms, my mind—all is yours; that my soul is in your body; and that the day when you change, or the day on which you cease to live, would be that of my death; that nature and the earth are only beautiful in my eyes because you inhabit them.

'If you believe not all this, if your heart is not convinced of it, you grieve me—you do not love me. There is a magnetic current that passes between those who love one another. You know that I could never bear to see a lover near you, much less to know that you endured him; to see him and to tear out his heart would be to me one and the same thing; and then, if I could raise my hand against your sacred person. . . . No; I should never dare to do that, but I would quit a life wherein I had been deceived by her who is most virtuous on earth. I am certain and proud of your love. Misfortunes are tests, which reveal to us mutually the force of our passion.

'A child, adorable as his mother, is about to see the light in your arms! Unhappy that I am, I would be satisfied with one day! A thousand kisses on your eyes, your lips! Adorable woman, what is your power? I am ill with your illness; fever is burning me! Do not keep the courier more than six hours, and let him return straight-

way to bring me the cherished letter from my sovereign.'[6]

After reading this letter, one can understand Joséphine's exclamation: 'What an odd creature Bonaparte is!' That husband indeed was odd, who was simple enough to believe in the sincerity of oaths exchanged during the period of engagement! That husband who laid boundless love at the feet of his wife was odd indeed! That young General was still more odd, who, acclaimed as a hero, offered all the temptations, and even the advances, of the most beautiful women in Italy, yet cared for one alone—his own wife, before whom he knelt as before an idol! That conqueror was odd who dictated his will to the Pope and to the sovereigns of Italy, and who yet, before his legitimate wife, became smaller than a page of sixteen in presence of the queen whom he adores!

Will it be suggested that a letter of this kind, with its inflamed and declamatory style, meant nothing; that it was simply the Italian custom, and that it was simply intended to charm the distant love, like a serenade sung to a mandolin?

[6] Imbert de Saint Armand, 'La Citoyenne Bonaparte,' pp. 48-50. Compare letters of the Great Duke of Marlborough to the Great Duchess, who, however, treated her spouse very differently.

That may be all very well in the land of the gondola, but it certainly was not the case with Napoleon.

A short time previously he had written to Carnot: 'I thank you very particularly for the attentions you have been kind enough to show to my wife. She is a sincere patriot, and I love her to distraction.'[7]

No, it was not as a theatrical virtuoso that he expressed his love; his pen translated the real feelings of his heart. We find exactly the same in a letter to his brother Joseph, to whom he writes on the same day at eight in the evening:

'I am in despair at knowing that my wife is ill; my head is in a whirl, and hideous presentiments agitate my thoughts. I beseech you to take every care of her. Except Joséphine, you are the only person for whom I care very much; reassure me, tell me the truth. You know my love, you know how ardent it is, you know that I have never loved before, that Joséphine is the first woman I have ever adored. Her illness drives me to despair. If she is well, and can undertake the journey, I ardently desire that she should join me. I want to see her—to press her to my heart. I love her madly, and cannot rest away from her. If she loved me no longer, I

[7] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. i., p. 251, No. 366: Piacenza, May 9, 1796.

should have nothing left to live for. Oh, my dear brother! see that my courier does not wait more than six hours in Paris, and that he hastens back to restore me to life. Good-bye; you will be happy. I was destined by nature to have nothing brilliant in my life except appearances.'[8]

It must not be thought that these enthusiastic letters were merely the pastime of an idle man, or that they were written only to cheat the monotony of long hours in camp. Here is Napoleon's budget of work for that same June 15:

'i. Order to Berthier to occupy Alessandria. ii. Report to the executive Directory upon the operations; request for reinforcements thus worded: "Think of the Army of Italy; send it men, and yet more men." iii. Ultimatum to the Senate of Genoa to stop its complicity in the assassination of French soldiers; threat to burn the places where these crimes are committed. iv. To inform Faypoult that Murat has been sent to the Senate of Genoa; recommendations. v. To the same, plan for selling the cannon left by the French in the river at Genoa. vi. To Masséna, authorization to take ammunition from the arsenals at Venice. vii. To Lannes, order to remain in his position. viii. To Ballet, order to send to Tortona the persons suspected of crime. ix. To

[8] To Joseph, at headquarters at Tortona, 27 Prairial, 1796; Charavay's collection, No. 574.

Pujet, order to send a detachment to Toulon. x. To Kellermann, notice of the arrival of the money and reinforcements destined for him.'[9]

This, of course, does not include the numberless verbal orders, and the constant cares which every day brings to a Commander-in-Chief whom nobody has ever accused of neglecting his duty.

[9] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. i., Nos. 638-647.

II.

Joséphine starts for Italy—Joy of Napoleon—His Passionate Love.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the devices she adopted, Joséphine, who was not enceinte, decided to start on her journey with Junot and Murat on June 24, 1796. She was driven to this decision by her husband's threat to return, by her fear on seeing Junot, who had come to bring some flags back to France, start again for Italy, where he would tell the truth to Napoleon.

'Her grief was extreme when she saw that there was no means of escape,' says Arnault.[1] 'Poor woman! she burst into tears, and sobbed as though she were going to execution.'

Marmont had been sent to meet her at Turin. On her arrival at Milan she was installed at the Palazzo Serbelloni.

'When she reached Milan,' says Marmont, 'General Bonaparte was very happy, for then he

[1] 'Souvenirs d'un Sexagénaire,' t. ii., p. 293.

lived only for her. This lasted for a long time; never had a purer, truer, more exclusive love possession of the heart of man!'[2]

These instants of happiness were short for him whose soldiers had just begun to call him 'Corporal' (at Lodi, May 10, 1796), for early in July Napoleon was once more in the field, leaving Joséphine at Milan.

The time he had just passed with his wife had not diminished his ardour; on the contrary, it appears to have increased daily. On July 6 he wrote to her:

'I have beaten the enemy; Kilmaine will send you the whole account. I am worn out with fatigue. I beg you to go straight to Verona; I want you, for I feel that I am going to be very ill. A thousand kisses. I am in bed.'[3]

On the 11th he reassures her, and briefly initiates her into the great and small impressions that he feels:

'Scarcely had we left Roverbella, when I learned that the enemy was at Verona. Masséna made arrangements, which were very successful. We took 600 prisoners and three pieces of cannon. General Brune received seven bullets in his clothes without being wounded by one; that is playing with fortune. A thousand kisses. I am

[2] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 188.

[3] 'Napoleon's Letters to Joséphine,' t. i., No. i.

very well. We only lost ten men killed, and a hundred wounded.'[4]

The letters increase in number as the separation is prolonged:

'I have your letter, my adorable friend,' he writes from Marmirolo on July 17; 'it has filled me with joy. I am grateful to you for the trouble you have taken to give me news of yourself. Your health must be better to-day; I am sure you are quite well by now. I strongly advise you to ride; it can only do you good.

'I turn over and over in my mind your kisses, your tears, your charming jealousy, and the charms of the incomparable Joséphine light unceasingly in my heart a warm and bright flame. When shall I be free from all worry, from all business, and at liberty to pass my time near you, with nothing to do but to love you, and nothing to think of but the happiness of saying and proving it? I hope you will soon be able to join me. I thought I loved you a few days ago, but since I have left you I feel that my love has increased a thousandfold. Since I have known you I have adored you more and more every day, which proves how false is La Bruyère's maxim that love is of sudden growth. I implore you to show me your defects sometimes; be less beautiful, less gracious, less tender, less loving especially; above

[4] 'Napoleon's Letters to Joséphine,' t. i., No. ii.

all, never be jealous, never cry; your tears distract me, burn my blood. Believe that it is no longer in my power to have a thought that is not for you, or an idea that is not subject to you. Rest well; recover your health quickly. Come and join me, so that before we die we may be able to say: "We were happy so many days." Millions of kisses, some even to Fortuné [Joséphine's dog], in spite of his naughtiness.'[5]

Letter of the next day—18th:

'I have had a letter from Eugène, which I forward to you. Pray write for me to those delightful children, and send them some trinkets. Assure them that I love them as though they were my own. What belongs to you is so confounded in my heart that there is no difference. I am very anxious to know how you are, and what you are doing. I have been to Virgil's village, on the edge of a lake, by moonlight, and not one instant passed without my thinking of Joséphine. I have lost my snuff-box, and beg you to choose me one—rather flat, and to have something pretty written upon it, with your hair. A thousand kisses as burning as you are cold.'[6]

The less response he receives from his wife, the more he insists. Next day, 19th, he writes:

'Two days without a letter from you! Thirty times to-day have I said that to myself. You

[5] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. iii. [6] *Ibid.*, No. iv.

must feel that that is sad, but you cannot doubt the tender and entire solicitude that I feel for you. I have received a post from Paris; there were two letters for you; I read them. Although this action seems quite simple to me, and you gave me leave to do it the other day, I fear lest you should be angry, and that grieves me. I should like to have sealed them up again, but that would have been horrible to me! If I be guilty, I ask your pardon; I swear it is not from jealousy—no, indeed. I have too high an opinion of my adorable friend for that! I wish you would give me absolute permission to read your letters, and in that case there would be no more remorse, no more fear. I called in the courier, who told me he had been to your house, and that you had sent word to him that you had no orders for him. Fie, wicked, cruel tyrant, little pretty monster! you laugh at my threats and my nonsense. You know well that, if I could shut you up in my heart, I would keep you there in prison. Let me know that you are gay, well, and sad.'[7]

Two days later, there is another letter from Castiglione:

'I hope that on arriving to-night I shall receive a letter from you. You know, my dear Joséphine, how much pleasure they cause me, and I am sure that you enjoy writing them. I shall start to-

[7] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. v.

night for Peschiera and Verona, whence I go to Mantua, and perhaps to Milan for one kiss, as you assure me they are not frozen. I hope that by then you will be quite strong again, and able to come with me to my headquarters, never to leave me any more. Are you not the soul of my life and the pulsation of my heart? Farewell, beautiful and good, incomparable, divine woman. A thousand kisses.'[8]

Next day he finds it impossible to join his wife, and he writes:

'You tell me your health is good, and therefore I beg you to come to Brescia. I am sending Murat thither now to choose for you such a lodging in the town as you will like. I think you had better sleep on the 6th at Cassano, leaving Milan very late, and come on the 7th to Brescia, where the most devoted lover awaits you. I am miserable that you should think that my heart can be accessible to any but you; it belongs to you by right of conquest, and the conquest will be solid and eternal. I know not why you speak to me of Madame Te . . . . to whom I am very indifferent, as well as to all the women in Brescia. As you are vexed at my opening your letters, I will not do it again; this shall be the last time. Your letter has not arrived. Remember to return to the Adjutant-General Miollis the box of

[8] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. vi.



medals that he writes to me he has given you. Men are so spiteful and wicked that one must be careful on every point. I have at Milan a carriage suitable both for town and country driving. You will use that for travelling. Bring with you your plate, and a portion of the objects that are necessary to you. Make short journeys, and travel during the cool of the day, so as not to tire yourself. I will come to meet you on the 7th, as far as possible on the road.'

If we place these letters side by side with those of Bonaparte written during the engagement, when he says: 'Do not kiss me; it burns my blood,' do we not see that the man is still the same, giving himself unreservedly?

Now that he needs no one's help to succeed, that he is received with acclamation as the chief of the Army and peoples of Italy, is there any difference between the *fiancé*, interested as he was said to be, and the husband whom we see to be exempt from all mercenary calculations? If difference there be, it is all to Napoleon's advantage, for the husband, madly in love, gives more than the betrothed ever promised; he gives too much for Joséphine's pleasure, and she opposes an icy reserve to his ardent demonstrations.

As generally happens with all men desperately in love, everything is to him a subject of uneasiness. Is she jealous? He reassures her. Has



he failed in respect towards the beloved? He will open no more of her letters. Is he not thoughtful enough about her? He showers care and devotion upon her. Is there a doubt of her arriving? With what attention does he map out every smallest detail so as to avoid any delay.

His thought is either lyrical or humble, but its object is always the same: to please his wife.

III.

Joséphine's Amusements at Milan—Napoleon's First Doubts—
Modest Letters from the Victorious General.

JOSÉPHINE, at the Palazzo Serbelloni, had found some of the frivolous pleasures that she had quitted with so much regret in Paris. A court of young and brilliant officers had formed around her who flattered her vanity. And it was amid such surroundings as these, where she was entirely given up to her own amusements, that the entreaties of her husband reached and worried her.

After again pretending poor health and even illness, she had at length to yield and to join Bonaparte.

At Brescia, the reunion of husband and wife was disturbed by the reappearance in the field of Wurmser, and Joséphine returned to Milan, not without running some danger. From this moment her indifference becomes more strongly marked, and Napoleon begins to realize it.

However, his letter of August 31, from Brescia, displays the same youthful impetuosity in his love :

'I am starting immediately for Verona. I had hoped for a letter from you, and am in a state of the utmost anxiety. You were not quite well when I left you; I beseech you not to leave me in this uncertain state. How can you forget him who loves you so devotedly? Three days without a letter from you, yet I have written to you several times. Absence is horrible: the nights are long, dull, insipid; the days monotonous. Think of me, live for me, be often in spirit with your true love, and believe that but one danger frightens him, and that is lest he should be no longer loved by Joséphine!'

Two days later, being still without news, he writes:

'No letter from you. I am really anxious, but yet I am told that you are well, and that you have been out in a boat on the Lake of Como. I daily await with eagerness the arrival of the courier, who will perhaps bring me a letter from you; you know how dear to me your letters are. I do not live far from you; the happiness of my life is centred in my sweet Joséphine.'[1]

It has often been said that Napoleon was violent to his wife, and yet, in spite of her coldness, what perseverance is there in his illusions!

A few days later he writes to inform her of his success:

[1] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. x., September 3, 1796.

'The enemy have lost, my dearest, 18,000 men, prisoners, and the rest killed or wounded. Wurmser has nothing left but to throw himself into Mantua. Never have we had such successes: Italy, Friuli, and the Tyrol are assured to the Republic.'

Now read the conclusion of this bulletin of victories:

'We shall see each other in a few days; that is the sweetest reward for all my pains and labours. A thousand burning, loving kisses.'[2]

The humble attitude of the young hero, piling trophies at the feet of Joséphine, might have been sufficient to inspire, we will not say love, but some regard at least. But such was not the case; witness these complaints of September 17:

'I write to you frequently, my dear one, and you but little to me. You are haughty and unkind, as unkind as you are heedless. It is treacherous to deceive a poor husband, a devoted lover. Is he to lose his rights because he happens to be far away, laden with work, fatigue, and anxiety? Without his Joséphine, without the assurance of her love, what would remain to him upon earth? What would he do then?

'We had a very bloody fight yesterday; the enemy lost many men, and were utterly defeated.

[2] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. xi., Montebello, September 10, 1796.

We have occupied the outskirts of Mantua. Farewell, adorable Joséphine ; one of these nights the doors will fly open with a crash, and there I shall be like a jealous man in your arms.'[3]

This letter is worth dwelling on. The idea that he is perhaps being deceived crosses Napoleon's mind ; but, with the sort of candour peculiar to blind lovers, he is tempted to believe himself in fault, and seems to excuse himself for the 'work which keeps him at a distance.'

Henceforward, by her indifference, by her frivolity, we shall see Joséphine demolish, stone by stone, the altar her husband had erected to her in his heart. It was especially between October 17 and November 28, 1796, that she paved the way for the ruin of his love, by such a course of conduct as would have driven any husband to extreme measures, when once he was obliged to admit to himself the brutal annihilation of all his dreams of happiness.

Although Napoleon's letters still bear the marks of the tenderest attachment, we shall find in them traces of the doubt that has entered his mind.

'I have received your letters,' he writes, 'and have pressed them to my heart and my lips, and the grief at my absence, divided from you as I am by a hundred miles, has vanished. But your letters are as cold as if you were fifty ; they might have

[3] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. xii.

been written after fifteen years of married life. I can only trace in them the friendship and the feelings of the winter of life. Fie, Joséphine! It is very wicked, very wrong, very traitorous of you. What else can you do to render me an object of pity? Love me no longer? Alas! that is already the case. Hate me? Well, I wish you did; everything degrades except hatred; but indifference, with pulse of marble, with staring eye, with monotonous step! A thousand thousand tender kisses, warm as my heart.'[4]

'Verona,
'*November* 13, 1796.

'I love you no longer; on the contrary, I detest you. You are a wretch, very clumsy, very stupid, a Cinderella. You never write to me; you do not love your husband. You know what pleasure your letters give him, and you never write him even six miserable lines!

'Pray, madam, what do you do all day? What important affairs have you that take up all the time in which you might be writing to your husband?

'What affection stifles and pushes on one side the love, the tender, constant love, that you have experienced from him? Who can be this marvellous being—this new lover who absorbs all

Napoleon to Joséphine, No. xiv., Modena, October 17, 1796.

your time, tyrannizes over your days, and prevents you from thinking of your husband? Joséphine, beware! One fine night I shall break open the doors and be with you.

'In truth, my dearest, I am uneasy at having no news from you. Write me four pages filled with those nice, kind things that are such a pleasure to my heart. I hope that ere long I shall seize you in my arms, and cover you with a million burning kisses—burning as though they came from the equator.'[5]

After reading this, one is inclined to ask at which one should most wonder—at Joséphine's indifference or Napoleon's unshakable constancy?

'Verona,

'*November* 24, 1796.

'I hope soon to be in your arms. I love you to distraction. All is well. Wurmser has been defeated at Mantua. Nothing is wanting to your husband's happiness, save the love of Joséphine.'[6]

Is it not remarkable how little place in his letters is occupied by his feats of arms? His letters might be those of any husband desperately in love with his wife, and not those of a hero who is filling all Europe with the deafening clamour of his triumphs.

[5] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. xvi.
[6] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. xvii.

IV.

Unexpected Arrival of Napoleon—The Empty Palace—Joséphine's Misconduct—Reconciliation—The Charm is broken.

On November 27 Napoleon reached Milan, revelling beforehand in the prospect of being once more with the well-beloved, who by one glance could make him forget all her wrongs towards him. The palazzo is empty—Joséphine is at Genoa, called thither by some amusements unknown to her husband. The parts have not changed since their engagement; the reciprocal programme is being carried out to the full—in marriage, the one saw the abandonment of his own identity, the highest consecration of love; the other saw only freedom to exhibit everywhere her feminine successes, the result of the glory of her husband.

Napoleon's despair in presence of this abandonment was absolute. His letter written to Joséphine under the pressure of his emotion makes that clear to us. It will describe better than we could do it, his appalling deception,

his profound bitterness, and his resignation as an unhappy, but still ardent, lover.

To Joséphine at Genoa.

'Milan,

'7 Frimaire, year v. (*November* 27, 1796),

'3 *o'clock in the afternoon.*

'I reach Milan, I rush to your room, I have quitted all to see you, to press you in my arms. You were not there; you are travelling about in search of amusement; you put distance between us as soon as I arrive; you care nothing for your Napoleon. A caprice made you love him, inconstancy renders him indifferent to you.

'Accustomed to dangers, I know the remedy for all the disappointments and ills of life. The misery that I feel is incalculable. I had the right not to have to reckon with that.

'I shall be here until nine o'clock to-morrow. Do not disturb yourself: run after pleasure: happiness is made for you. The whole world is too happy if it can but please you, and your husband alone is very, very unhappy.'[1]

This disillusionment on his arrival in Milan produces upon Napoleon a cruel effect; the terrible blow makes in his heart a wound through which escape, in his letter of the next day, the groans of his exasperated love.

[1] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. xviii.

'Milan,
'8 Frimaire, year v. (*November* 28, 1796),
'8 *o'clock in the evening.*

'I have just received the courier whom Berthier had sent to Genoa. You have had no time to write to me? I can well believe it. Surrounded by pleasures and amusements, you would have been wrong had you made the smallest sacrifice for me.

'Berthier was kind enough to show me your letter to him. My wish is that you should alter none of your plans, give up none of the parties to which you are invited; I am not worth a sacrifice, and the happiness or misery of a man for whom you do not care need not interest you.

'To love you only, to render you happy, to do nothing that can annoy you, that is my destiny and the object of my life.

'Be happy, do not reproach me, care nothing about the fidelity of a man who lives only through you, enjoy only your own pleasures and your own happiness. In asking you for a love equal to mine, I was wrong. How can I expect lace to weigh as heavily as gold? In sacrificing to you all my desires, all my thoughts, every instant of my life, I simply yield to the ascendancy that your charms, your character, and your whole person have obtained over my unhappy heart. I am unhappy if nature did not endow me with

attractions sufficient to captivate you, but what I deserve at the hands of Joséphine is at least consideration and esteem, for I love you madly and solely.

'Good-bye, adorable woman—good-bye, my Joséphine. May fate concentrate in my heart all the sorrows and all the troubles, but may she give Joséphine happy and prosperous days! Who deserves it more than she? When it has been proved that she can no longer love me, I will conceal my profound grief and will content myself with being of use and service to her in some matters. I reopen my letter to give you a kiss. Ah, Joséphine—Joséphine!'[2]

Poor unhappy lover who cannot believe in his misfortune, who sums up all his sorrow in that heartrending exclamation!

How can we explain the coldness of a woman for a husband who brought her, over and above passionate love, the laurels of Montenotte and Arcola?

Joséphine was thoughtless and a coquette; we know that. Thoughtlessness may produce momentary forgetfulness, but not abandonment of duty. Coquetry produces other consequences; between tempting others and being tempted one's self there is no great distance.

[2] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. xix.

All the young officers who surrounded Joséphine 'were wild with enthusiasm and happiness, and admirably calculated to turn many heads.'[3]

One of them, named Hippolyte Charles, who had not great external advantages, being small and thin, very brown of skin, with hair black as jet, but very careful of his person and very smart in his fine hussar uniform laced with gold, showed the greatest attention to the wife of his Commander-in-Chief. He was a man of the kind most dangerous to a woman who is rather bored and does not love her husband. Charles was what is called amusing. He made puns, and was somewhat affected.[4] The keen interest that Joséphine took in this young hussar was known to everyone in the Army of Italy, and when what Monsieur de Ségur calls 'Napoleon's jealous displeasure'[5] burst forth, no one was surprised to see Charles, at that time aide-de-camp to General Leclerc, 'banished from the Army of Italy by order of the Commander-in-Chief.'[6] 'During his first campaigns in Italy,' says Sismondi, 'he dismissed from his headquarters several of Joséphine's lovers.'[7]

[3] Stendhal, 'Vie de Napoléon,' p. 138.
[4] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. iv., *passim.*
[5] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 28.
[6] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. iv., *passim.*
[7] 'Revue Historique,' t. ix., p. 365.

Joséphine, on her return from Genoa, had no difficulty in softening Napoleon. 'Concealing his profound grief,' according to his own expression, he pardoned her, asked, indeed, nothing better than to pardon, such was his condition of passionate devotion. But his illusions were destroyed; in place of a tender affection, he found emptiness in the heart of his wife.

His weakness with respect to Joséphine has given rise to many suppositions. The least ill-intentioned, among whom is Imbert de Saint-Amand, have said that Bonaparte needed Joséphine to support him with the Directory. This insinuation must be put aside; nothing justifies it. Not a word is said on this subject in the 'Letters of Napoleon to Joséphine,' edited by Queen Hortense, who would have lost no opportunity of putting forward, had they existed, the services that Joséphine had rendered to her husband. Neither is any allusion of the kind made in the stories of eye-witnesses of the Italian campaign.

There is nothing in Bonaparte's conduct which need surprise us. To induce him to be merciful there was, first, the remains of his love; next, an inclination, comprehensible enough, not to show himself pitiless to a first fault, especially when there was no proof of the gravity of that fault.

Napoleon, therefore, kept his domestic troubles

to himself, and, like most loving and deceived husbands, invented for himself sophistries which fostered his secret wish not to leave Joséphine. He would not attempt to sound the matter, for fear of learning too much, and regarded as lightness, of no consequence, the grave faults of which his wife was guilty.

It is possible that, in avoiding a scandal, he may have had before his eyes public opinion, which is always ready to laugh at the husband under such circumstances; he may have dreaded to divulge his conjugal misfortunes to Europe, which was looking out for the news of a fresh victory by every post; or he may have said to himself that a public scandal would damage the respect that he needed at that period from the cardinals and ambassadors with whom he was in daily conference. Did calculations of personal interest, however, play at that time too great a part in Napoleon's mind?

To this question how can any answer be given but a negative one, when we see Napoleon immediately setting to work to transform his love into a loyal and peaceable attachment which nothing, not even divorce, could ever alter; when we see him doing his utmost to render happy a woman who does not love him, and supporting patiently, with that object, the bitter humiliations that must result from a false situation, wherein

each day brings a fresh capitulation on the part of the husband?

He, whose word was law to thousands of men; he, who by a gesture could send an army into any given place, said to Arnault, pointing to Joséphine's little dog, then lying on a sofa:

'Do you see that gentleman? He is my rival. He was in possession of Madame's bed when I married her. I wished to remove him; it was quite useless to think of it. I was told that I must either sleep elsewhere, or consent to share my bed. That annoyed me considerably, but I had to make up my mind. I gave way. The favourite was less accommodating; I bear proofs on my leg of what I say.'[8]

Did Napoleon refer to his wedding-night when he wrote to Joséphine, three months after marriage: 'millions of kisses, even to Fortuné, notwithstanding his naughtiness'?

And when Fortuné (that was the name of the happy dog) disappeared, and was replaced by a pug, in spite of Napoleon's express orders to the contrary, he encouraged his cook to keep a huge bull-dog, in the hope that the big dog would devour the little one. Thus, the man who dictated laws to Europe dared not, at home, turn a dog out of his room. And we have seen that he dared not open a letter addressed to his wife.

[8] Arnault, 'Souvenirs d'un Sexagénaire,' t. iii., p. 31.

The fact is that, in dictating laws to Europe, Napoleon was doing his duty as a General to his country and to his armies, and that in seeking for peace at home he was doing his duty as a husband—at least, according as he saw it from the point of view of his devotion to his wife and the force of habit : eminently commonplace virtues.

V.

Family Life at Montebello and Passeriano—Marriages of Eliza and Pauline Bonaparte—Affability at Home and Authority in Public—Love frozen.

The life led by Napoleon between the taking of Mantua and the peace of Campo Formio, at Montebello, or Passeriano, was essentially family life. He lived surrounded by his mother, his sisters Eliza and Pauline, by his brothers Joseph and Louis, and by Eugène, son of Joséphine, then fifteen years of age, whom he had made his aide-de-camp.[1]

Let us take the account of eye-witnesses.

'At home, with his staff,' says Marmont,[2] 'he always displayed extreme good-nature, sometimes almost reaching pleasant familiarity. He liked a joke, and his jokes had never anything bitter in them, they were always merry and in good taste; he often joined in our games, and his example on more than one occasion brought the grave Austrian plenipotentiaries to join them also. His

[1] Prince Eugène, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 33.
[2] 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 297.

work was easy, his hours unregulated, and one could always interrupt him at meal-times.'

'After dinner,' says Arnault,[3] 'we used to go into the drawing-room. He would himself direct our amusements. If conversation happened to flag, he would say: "Come now, everyone must relate his history," and if no one began, he would continue: "Well, since none of you will tell his history, I must tell you a story;" and he would start off with one of those dramatic and fantastic inventions that he loved. If Joséphine made up a table of *vingt-et-un* in a corner with the ladies, Napoleon would carry someone off to an opposite corner and begin to play the game of goose, very seriously, even cheating to avoid falling into the "well."'

He always received his friends with the heartiest hospitality.

'You know there is always a place at table for you here,' he said to Arnault on his first arrival at Passeriano.

At Montebello his sister Pauline married General Leclerc, son of a flour-merchant. A few months previously, Eliza had married Bacciochi, a subaltern officer,[4] and from these marriages we may infer that Napoleon had not yet begun to dream of thrones for the members of his family.

3 'Souvenirs d'un Sexagénaire,' t. iii., p. 330.

4 'Mémoires du Roi Joseph,' t. i., p. 65.

Will anyone now reproach him, as Miot de Melito does,[5] with not displaying confusion or embarrassment at the excessive honours paid to him in public, and with receiving them as though he had always been accustomed to them? Will any blame him for bringing to the exercise of his duty an authority which awed everyone, an attitude and a look which compelled obedience?[6]

On the one hand he was authoritative, inflexible in command, haughty, reserved in his public dealings; on the other, amiable, pleasant and cordial as soon as he put off the functions for which he had to keep up respect. The latter attitude is certainly that of the man who, born far from grandeur, gives himself up to those tranquil pleasures which he had imagined in his childhood.

The fact, however, still remains that, after the incident of the expedition to Genoa, disenchantment had wounded Bonaparte's soul. The burning letters from Verona are succeeded (but how differently!) by those from Ancona and Tolentino during the ratification of the treaty with the plenipotentiaries of the Pope.

'I am still at Ancona. I do not ask you to come, because things are not yet settled; but in a few days I hope that all will be finished. Besides,

[5] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 150.

[6] Marmont, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 297.

this place is very unpleasant, and everyone is afraid.

'I leave to-morrow for the mountains. You do not write to me; you ought to give me news of yourself every day. I beg you to take a walk daily; it will be good for you.

'I send you a million kisses. I have neve been so bored as during this wretched war.

'Good-bye, sweet friend; think of me.'[7]

Here is another letter, written three days later:

'I have no news of you, and no longer doubt that you do not love me any more. I have sent you newspapers and sundry letters. I start immediately for the mountains. As soon as I know what is going to happen next, I will send for you: that is the dearest wish of my heart. A thousand thousand kisses.'[8]

As usual, Joséphine ascribes her neglect to ill-health; then Napoleon's affection revives, and a momentary recrudescence of tenderness appears.

On February 16, 1797, he writes:

'You are sad—ill; you want to go to Paris. Do you not love your friend any more? This idea renders me miserable. My darling, life has been intolerable to me since I learned of your sadness. I am sending Moscati to you at once,

[7] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. xxi., Ancona, February 10, 1797.

[8] *Ibid.*, No. xxii., February 13, 1797.

so that he may take care of you. My health is indifferent, and my cold still hangs about me. I beg you to take care of yourself, to love me as much as I love you, and to write to me every day. My uneasiness is very great.

'I have told Moscati to bring you to Ancona, if you wish to come. I will write to you there to tell you where I am.

'Perhaps I shall make peace with the Pope and then I shall soon be with you. That is the most ardent desire of my soul.

'I give you a hundred kisses. Believe that nothing can equal my love, except my uneasiness. Write to me every day yourself. Good-bye, my very dear one!'[9]

Before reading the next letter, written on the very day of the signature of the treaty with the Pope, it is worth noting how little vanity he displays in announcing this, his first sovereign act.

'The peace with Rome has just been signed. Bologna, Ferrara, Romagna, are ceded to the Republic. The Pope is to give us 30,000,000 francs (£1,200,000) in a short time, and some works of art.

'I leave to-morrow for Ancona, and thence go to Rimini, Ravenna, and Bologna. If your health

[9] Napoleon to Joséphine, No. xxiii.

permits, come to Rimini or Ravenna, but take care of yourself, I conjure you.

'Not a line from you! Good God! what have I done? Have I deserved such treatment, who think only of you, love only Joséphine, live only for my wife, rejoice only in the happiness of my friend? My darling, I implore you, think of me and write to me every day. Either you are ill or you do not love me. Do you think my heart is made of marble? Do my troubles interest you so little? You must know me very little. I cannot believe it. You, to whom nature has given wit, sweetness, and beauty; you, who alone can reign in my heart; you, who know too well the dominion that you have over me? Write to me, think of me, love me.

'For life, yours.'[10]

Henceforward Napoleon's letters are more temperate. This letter is like the last flicker of a dying fire, which, as it goes out, sends up here and there a few sparks. It would not take much to revive the fire, but Joséphine has gradually let Napoleon's love die out. Too sure of herself, thinking that she could play at will with her husband's devotion, she continues to follow her own path with serene indifference.

Thus passed the days which witnessed the

[10] Napoleon to Joséphine, No. xxiv.

termination of the marvellous campaign in Italy, concluded by the ratification of November 30, 1797, signed by Bonaparte at Rastadt, whither he went alone.

He rejoined Joséphine in Paris on December 5. She could then enjoy, in her beloved centre, all the satisfactions that her vanity could desire from the glory of a husband who excited universal enthusiasm which she alone did not share.

VI.

In Egypt—Unfavourable Reports of Joséphine—Last Illusions destroyed—The Guest at Malmaison—Queen of the East.

GAIETIES and receptions of every kind did not prevent Napoleon from occupying himself actively with the execution of his plans for the conquest of Egypt.

On the evening of May 4 Napoleon quitted Paris, accompanied by Joséphine, Bourrienne, Duroc, and Lavalette.[1] Contrary to what has been stated, Eugène was not of the party; he had started previously, early in April,[2] and was waiting at Toulon.

Napoleon and his companions travelled in a very large and high berlin, on the top of which was a *vache* (such was the name given to the awning that covered the luggage). 'This pile of luggage,' says Marmont,[3] 'saved the lives of the travellers on one occasion.'

[1] Marmont, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 353.
[2] Prince Eugène, 'Mémoires,' t. i.
[3] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 353.

In order to avoid Marseilles, where they would have lost time, they travelled from Roquevaire by unfrequented cross-country roads. Suddenly, in the middle of the night, as they were going rapidly downhill, the carriage was stopped by a violent shock. A large branch, stretching across the road, had caught the awning and stopped the carriage. Ten yards farther on, at the foot of the hill, a bridge over a rapid stream that they had to cross had broken down unknown to everybody: the carriage must have fallen into it, when this branch stopped it almost on the brink of the precipice.

Marmont saw 'the hand of Providence' in this picturesque incident, omitted by Bourrienne, who was amongst the travellers. Other historians having regarded it as veracious, we reproduce it as a curious circumstance.

They reached Toulon on April 8; on the 19th Napoleon embarked on the flag-ship *Orient*.

His farewell with Joséphine was touching. Did she ask to go with him? She says that she did, in a letter to her daughter Hortense;[4] Bourrienne says nothing of the proposal.

We are quite ready to admit that it was made. It is in the natural order of things that a woman, at the moment of parting, should appear to wish

[4] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i.: Joséphine to Hortense, No. vi.

to accompany her husband, even though she have no intention of going with him.

It would, however, have been impossible to take a woman on so perilous an enterprise.

On board the *Orient*, Napoleon gathered round him all the scientific men of the expedition, among others Monge and Berthollet. He started discussions, of which he generally gave the text; they ran principally upon questions of religion, the different kinds of government, and strategy. One day he inquired whether the planets were inhabited; another, what was the age of the world; another, by what means would our globe be destroyed—by fire or water? On another he raised the question of the amount of credence to be placed in presentiments, and of the interpretation of dreams. He took a large share in these controversies, 'and,' adds Bourrienne, 'passionately devoted to France, anxious for his own glory, though his heart was so full, there was still a large place kept for Joséphine, of whom he almost always spoke to me in our familiar conversations.'[5]

After the taking of Malta (June 13), Bonaparte disembarked at Alexandria on July 2. Then followed, during more than a year, the prodigious feats of arms of that Egyptian campaign which were to carry the names of France and Napoleon far into the depths of Asia.

[5] 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 69.

It was during this expedition that the last of the few illusions that Napoleon still cherished concerning Joséphine disappeared.

Immediately on reaching Cairo, fearing some new follies on the part of his wife, he was seized with anxiety whereof we can find traces in a letter to his brother Joseph.

'Look after my wife; see her sometimes. I beg Louis to give her good advice.'

And cannot one feel a sigh of regret in the words with which he concludes:

'I send a handsome shawl to Julia; she is a good woman; make her happy.'[6]

Detailed reports quickly reached him which roused in him the darkest jealousy. The fact is indisputable; it is borne out by Napoleon himself in a letter to Joseph in which he says: 'I have many domestic sorrows. . . .' An addition has been made to these points, which exist in the text of Joseph's memoirs, by these words: 'for the veil is entirely lifted.' These words are to be found in an author who prides himself upon having no respect for *Buonaparte*.[7]

We should have carefully avoided any quotation from this abominable pamphleteer; but in this particular instance, the whole letter being quoted

[6] Joseph, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 188.

[7] Lewis Goldsmith, 'Secret History of the Cabinet of Napoleon Buonaparte,' vol. i., p. 174; London, 1814.

textually without other modification than the restoration of the words designedly omitted by Joseph, it seems right to adopt the correction, which appears to be authentic. The editor of the 'Memoirs of King Joseph,' whence we have taken the mutilated text, has, in a recent work,[8] adopted the version given by Lewis Goldsmith.

The letter concludes with these words :

'Your affection is very dear to me. Were I to lose that and to see you betray me, I should turn misanthrope ; it alone saves me. One is in a sad plight when all one's affections are centred upon one person.

'Arrange that I should have active employment on my return, either near Paris or in Burgundy. I wish to pass the winter there, and to shut myself up ; I am tired of human nature. I want solitude and isolation ; grandeur wearies me, my affections are dried up.'[9]

His mind, harassed, not without anterior reasons, was naturally open to every suspicion. Hear a witness who cannot be suspected :

'About this time,' says Prince Eugène in his memoirs, 'the Commander-in-Chief began to have great cause for trouble, partly because of the discontent existing in a portion of the army, and especially among some of the Generals, and partly

[8] Baron du Casse, 'Les Rois Frères de Napoléon I.'

[9] Joseph, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 189.

on account of news that he received from France, where people were trying to disturb his domestic happiness. Although I was very young, I inspired him with so much confidence that he made me a sharer in his sorrows. It was generally at night that he thus unbosomed himself, walking with great strides up and down his tent. I was the only person to whom he could talk openly. I sought to soften his resentment; I comforted him as best I could, and as much as my age and the respect I felt for him permitted.'[10]

A heart must be very full ere it will make such confidences to a youth of eighteen, and especially when he is the son of the wife in question. It seems as though he wished to reassure himself by the boy's simple answers.

Like all minds ill at ease, it is probable that Bonaparte himself introduced the subject in conversing with people whom he supposed were well informed. One day in February, 1799, at El-Arich, he was walking with Junot, who made such revelations to him that Napoleon flew into a violent passion, and addressing himself to Bourrienne, in a voice stifled with rage, said:

'You are not attached to me! Women. . . Joséphine! . . . Had you cared for me, you would have told me all I have just learned from Junot; he is a true friend. Joséphine! . . . and

[10] 'Mémoires du Prince Eugène,' t. i., p. 12.

I am six hundred leagues away. . . . You ought to have told me! Joséphine! to have thus deceived me! She! . . . Woe to them! I will exterminate the whole tribe of fops and puppies! As for her, divorce! Yes, divorce! A public, overwhelming divorce! I must write! I know all! It is your fault; you should have told me!'

Bourrienne sought to calm him, suggested doubts, spoke of his glory:

'My glory!' exclaimed Napoleon in despair. 'What would I not give if only what Junot has told me were not true, so dearly do I love that woman! If Joséphine be guilty, divorce must for ever separate us. I will not be the laughing-stock of all the asses in Paris! I will write to Joseph; he will get the divorce pronounced!'[11]

On what foundations rested the reports which had travelled across the Mediterranean and reached Napoleon?

'That silly Joséphine,' as Gohier calls her,[12] while running about in society, had had the misfortune to meet the former hussar officer, Hippolyte Charles, who was expelled from the Army of Italy by Bonaparte; perhaps they met at the house of Despréaux, husband of Mdlle. Guimard, 17, Rue du Mont Blanc,[13] the fashionable dancing-

[11] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., pp. 211-214.

[12] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 262.

[13] Fouché, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 29.

master of the time,[14] where she went to distract herself during the absence of her husband. This agreeable, nowadays people would say irresistible, young man, had, on the recommendation of Joséphine, entered as partner the large provision business of Louis Bron and Company.

This position enabled him to maintain a fairly brilliant establishment, which was an addition to his other charms. He began by paying several visits to Malmaison, and ended by living there altogether as its master.[15]

The persistent but vague reports that reached Napoleon's ears had their origin in these compromising relations. At that distance he was powerless to avenge himself; he thus had time to master his first transports of wrath, and ended by entirely detaching himself from Joséphine.

Thenceforward, we may regard Napoleon's love for his wife as dead. All the desires of the young General, formerly drawn to Paris only, were allowed free rein. He publicly attracted attention to himself with a young and sprightly blonde, Madame Pauline Fourès, wife of one of the officers of the Chasseurs à Cheval. The husband was in the way, so he was sent to Europe by the following order:

'Citizen Fourès, lieutenant in the 22nd regi-

[14] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 29.

[15] *Ibid.*, t. iv., p. 250.

ment of Chasseurs à Cheval, is hereby commanded to leave Rosetta by the first diligence, and to betake himself to Alexandria, where he is to embark. Citizen Fourès will be the bearer of despatches which he is not to open till he is at sea, wherein he will find his instructions.'[16]

The attentions which this pretty lady received gained for her the title of 'Queen of the East.'[17]

The intimacy was public. Bonaparte and his mistress used to drive together in an open carriage. Eugène was violently annoyed at it, and confided his troubles to Berthier. From the day on which Napoleon learned that he was causing pain to Joséphine's son, he ceased to drive with Madame Fourès.[18]

[16] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. v., p. 216, No. 3,775, to Citizen Fourès, Lieutenant of Chasseurs; Cairo, December 18, 1798.

[17] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. iv., p. 58; Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 173.

[18] Prince Eugène, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 46.

VII.

Gohier's Wise Advice to Joséphine—Napoleon's Return to Paris—Divorce resolved upon—Napoleon's Weak Side—Pardon—Sudden Change in Joséphine.

While Napoleon, in consequence of political news from France, was meditating his return and combining plans for passing through the British cruisers, Gohier, then President of the Directory, scandalized at Joséphine's compromising proceedings, lavished upon her advice as prudent as it was useless. He advised her to obtain a divorce, adding with something of a chuckle :

'You tell me that you and Monsieur Charles feel nothing but friendship for one another ; but if this friendship is so exclusive as to make you violate the proprieties of society, I must speak to you as if there were love in the case. Get a divorce, because friendship, self-denying like other feelings, will take the place to you of everything else. Believe me, trouble will come out of this.'

The advice, though wise, did not suit Joséphine. She liked the homage she obtained as wife of the

conqueror ; she wanted all its privileges without any of its duties.

Nevertheless, she knew that the storm was gathering round her : she must have received letters, concealed from us, but which could have left in her mind no doubt as to her husband's indignation. In proportion as she considered Napoleon's return nearer, so she went more frequently to Gohier's house, thinking that by this respectable company she could give the lie to slander and suspicion. On hearing of Bonaparte's return she said naïvely to Madame Gohier :

'I am going to meet him ; it is important that I should not be forestalled by his brothers, who have always hated me. Of course I have nothing to fear from calumny : when Bonaparte learns how much I have been in your society, he will be highly flattered at, and grateful for, the reception that I have received in your house during his absence.'[1]

But, as events showed, Napoleon was not flattered in the smallest degree, as will be seen :

'By a most unlucky mistake,' says Eugène,[2] 'my mother, who, at the first news of his landing, had started to go and meet him at Lyons, took the road through Burgundy, while he came by the Bourbonnais. In this manner we reached Paris forty-eight hours before her.'

[1] Gohier, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 199. [2] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 75.

So it happened that, on October 16, at six in the morning, Napoleon found no one when he reached his house in the Rue Chantereine, and his irritation and jealousy were thereby increased. When Joséphine eventually arrived, he would not see her, and announced his formal intention of divorcing her.

Alone in his room at that moment, could Napoleon concentrate all his thoughts upon his domestic troubles?

It will be admitted that the situation was a curious one. Here was a man who had landed suddenly, who had traversed France amid the acclamations of the entire population, who, the moment he sets foot in Paris, expects to hear his staircase resound with the tread of many persons coming to discuss with him the best means for saving the State, and who finds himself threatened with endless worries and with all the sickening preparations for a divorce suit.

However, at first, he snapped his fingers at public opinion. We may even suppose that, had Joséphine retired quietly and simply before her husband's anger, the divorce proceedings would have followed their natural course, while Napoleon would have occupied himself with other things, and the plot of the 18 Brumaire would have been quite enough to absorb him entirely.

Had Napoleon been intractable or pitiless, he

would have sternly locked his door and written to his solicitor. But from the moment that he did not take radical measures, that he condescended to enter into explanations, and to undergo scenes and tears, Joséphine's cause was gained in advance.

The considerations of public opinion, which was not severe at that time upon the rupture of ties formed without any religious ceremony, would not have sufficed to turn Napoleon from his resolution, and that was well known in the Rue Chantereine. Therefore, Joséphine did not attempt to brave her husband, nor to defy him to provoke a scandal hurtful to his political position. Knowing him as she did, she appealed to his heart only, and made the first breach, through which later arguments were to pass, by sending to him her two children, Hortense and Eugène. They threw themselves in tears at Napoleon's feet, imploring him not to abandon their mother.

This heartrending scene, borrowed from Madame d'Abrantès,[3] is discreetly confirmed by Eugène himself.[4]

'Before our return,' he says, 'my mother's enemies had a free field, and used every opportunity of damaging her in her husband's estimation. I judged this from his cold reception of her, and saw with grief that he had pre-

[3] 'Mémoires,' t. ii., pp. 95, 96. [4] *Ibid.*, t. i., p. 76.

served the bad impressions that I hoped I had destroyed when he took me into his confidence in Egypt.'

Bourrienne, on his side, advances a further proof of the truth of our story, by saying:

'Bonaparte was exasperated in the highest degree. He therefore received Joséphine with calculated severity, and with an expression of the coldest indifference. He remained three days without communicating with her.'[5]

When about to complete a definite rupture, where is the husband who does not hesitate and feel some compassion at the idea that the woman once beloved is to find herself abandoned and left to face by herself all the terrible difficulties of life? Bonaparte, whose heart still retained a powerful impression of his former love, could not escape these feelings of protection and pity. Moreover, had he not before him two unhappy children, imploring him not to leave them orphaned for a second time? He had to give way when he saw Joséphine, her eyes streaming with tears, in despair, conducted to his presence by Hortense and Eugène. Napoleon could no longer restrain his emotion; he opened his arms and forgave his wife.

From that moment a new existence began between them, and Joséphine was able to measure

[5] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 37.

the full depths of the abyss that she herself had hollowed. Contrary to her expectations, she found her husband prepared to hesitate at no extreme measure ; she was seized with terror at the idea that she might fall back into the condition of isolation without prestige, which she dreaded beyond everything else.

Still obedient to all the instincts of her being, determined on no account to lose the advantages attaching to her position as Napoleon's wife, she felt the necessity of displaying her attachment to him. Henceforward she became anxious to please him, and at the time of the 18 Brumaire she was able to employ herself with much acuteness in seconding his views. It was she who, in order to lull the vigilance of the President of the Directory, undertook to invite him to breakfast at the very hour at which the *coup d'état* was to take place. On the 17 Brumaire she wrote :[6]

'Come, my dear Gohier, with your wife, to breakfast with me at eight o'clock to-morrow morning. I want to talk to you about interesting matters.

'Good-bye, my dear Gohier ; count always upon my sincere friendship.

'LAPAGERIE-BONAPARTE.'

[6] Gohier, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 234.

Later on, it was Joséphine who became sincerely in love with, and jealous of, Napoleon, as she gradually felt him falling away from her, and as, also, she felt herself growing older.

He, completely disillusioned, made the best of the relations that his wife had created. He sought to have a proper household, and his preoccupation was to preserve his dignity as a man. He did not cease to be thoughtful, affectionate, and solicitous for her comfort, and in that, perhaps, he was only yielding to the desire of seeing happy faces around him.

VIII.

The Husband on a Campaign—Prosaic Letters—Husband's Advice.

If it be true, as has been said, that a man's style is himself, we can study Napoleon from his letters to Joséphine written at different stages along his glorious road, on which he met sovereign princes, emperors, and kings of Europe, flattered by some, begged of by others, arbiter of the destinies of all.

Amid all these ovations the man never changed. He remained perfectly simple, with a simplicity and a good-nature that neither pomp nor magnificence could alter. His letters are those of a good paterfamilias on a business journey.

This unalterable side of Napoleon's character will be brought into prominence by the fragments we quote from his letters, written at different steps in his career :

'The weather is so bad I have stayed in Paris. The fête was very fine, but it tired me rather, and the blister that has been put under my arm gives me much pain.'

'I have received from London some plants for you, and have sent them to your gardener. If the weather be as bad at Plombières as it is here, you will not enjoy yourself. Everything kind to mamma and Hortense.'[1]

'I have received your letter, good little Joséphine. I was shooting yesterday at Marly, and hurt my thumb slightly in shooting at a wild boar. Your big son has been ill, but is better now.'[2]

'Give no audience to T——, and refuse to see him. Do not receive B—— except in presence of other people.'[3]

'The Court here is very fine, the bride very handsome, and pleasant people everywhere, including the Electress, who seems very good-natured, although a daughter of the King of England.'[4]

'It is long since I have had any news of you. Will the magnificent fêtes at Basle and Stuttgart make people forget the poor soldiers who live covered with mud, rain, and blood? Good-bye, my friend. My eyes are better.'[5]

From these last lines we may conclude that, in

[1] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. xxviii., Paris, 1801.
[2] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. xxx., June 23, 1803.
[3] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. xxxvi., October 6, 1804. Tallien, or Barras.
[4] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. xxxviii., Ludwigsburg, October 4, 1805.
[5] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. liii., Brunn, December 10, 1805.

spite of her good intentions, Joséphine's real nature sometimes got the better of her. She forgot everything if there were anything in the nature of gaieties or dissipation to take off her attention. If, in this particular, she has remained the same as she was in 1796, Napoleon has much altered. He no longer scolds or loses his temper; it is in terms of somewhat ponderous irony that he reprehends her negligence:

'Great Empress,' he writes ten days later, 'not one letter from you have I had since you left Strasburg. You have been at Baden, Stuttgart, and Munich, without once writing to us. It is neither very kind nor very affectionate. I am still at Brunn. The Russians have left, and I have a little respite. In a few days I shall decide what to do. Condescend, from the summit of your magnificence, to think of your slaves.'[6]

It will be easily understood that, faithful to her custom, Joséphine made her excuse of ill-health. The next day's letter proves it:

'I have your letter of the 25th. I am very sorry to learn that you are unwell; it is not a good preparation for a journey of a hundred leagues at this time of year. I do not know what I shall do; I depend on events; I have no will, I depend entirely upon what happens.'[7]

[6] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. liv., December 19, 1805.
[7] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. lv., Schönbrunn, December 20, 1805.

A few days later they met at Munich on the occasion of the marriage of Prince Eugène, who, by the help of Napoleon, had gained the hand of Augusta, daughter of the King of Bavaria.

The correspondence reopened in 1806, with the campaign in Prussia. The lines that we are about to place before our readers were therefore written when his reputation was at its highest :

'I have grown fatter since my departure. I travel between twenty and twenty-five leagues a day, on horseback, in a carriage, in every manner. I go to bed at eight, and get up sometimes at midnight. I occasionally dream that you are not yet in bed.'[8]

'You are wrong in showing so much kindness to people who are unworthy of it. Madame L—— is a fool, so stupid, indeed, that you ought to see through and pay no attention to her.'[9]

'My dearest, your letter of January 20 has caused me pain ; it is too sad. There is the misfortune of not being something of a *dévote*. You say that your happiness makes your glory ; that is not generous, you ought to say : the happiness of others makes my glory ; that is not conjugal, you ought to say : the happiness of my husband makes my glory ; that is not maternal, you ought to say : the happiness of my children

[8] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. lviii., October 13, 1806.
[9] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. lxviii., Berlin, November 29, 1806.

makes my glory. But as people, husbands and children want a little glory to make them happy, you must not be shocked at it! Joséphine, your heart is excellent and your reason feeble. You feel keenly, but you argue indifferently. There, now I have scolded you enough; I want you to be happy and contented with your lot.'[10]

'I am glad to see that you have been to the opera, and that you intend to receive once a week. Go to the play sometimes, and always to the best box. I am delighted at the fêtes that people are giving you.'[11]

'My dearest, I have not written to you for two or three days. I reproach myself for it, as I know how uneasy you are. I am very well, and my business is going well. I am in a wretched village where I shall still have to pass some time; it is not the same as a large town. I tell you again, I have never been so well; you will find me much fatter. The weather here is like spring; the snow is melting, the rivers thawing; it delights me.'[12]

'In everything you must live exactly as you did when I was at Paris. You did not then go out to see plays in small theatres or other places. You must always go to the best box. Grandeur

[10] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. xciii., February, 1807.

[11] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. ciii., Liebstadt, February 21, 1807.

[12] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. cv., Osterode, March 2, 1807.

has its drawbacks. An Empress cannot go to the places which private persons may frequent.'[13]

'See little of Madame de P—— She is a woman who keeps bad society, which is too common and too low.'[14]

'I have just moved my headquarters to a very fine country house somewhat resembling that belonging to Bessières, where I have plenty of fireplaces. This is very pleasant to me, as I often get up in the night and like to see the fire.'[15]

'I am told that the Arch-Chancellor (Cambacérès) is in love. Is it a joke or is it true? It has amused me; you might have told me of it!'[16]

'I have noticed with regret the bad conduct of Madame —— Could you not tell her to lead a better life, as she may otherwise bring down upon herself trouble with her husband? Napoleon[17] is well, they tell me. I can imagine the pain his illness must have caused his poor mother; but measles is a disease to which everyone is liable.

[13] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. cxii., Osterode, March 25, 1807.

[14] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. cxiii., Osterode, March 27, 1807.

[15] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. cxv., Finkenstein, April 2, 1807.

[16] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. cxxi., Finkenstein, May 2, 1807.

[17] Charles Napoleon, Crown Prince of Holland, was suffering from an illness of which he died at the Hague, May 5, 1807.

I hope that he has been vaccinated, and that he will escape small-pox.'[18]

'I can picture to myself all the grief that poor Napoleon's death must have caused you. You can understand the grief that I feel. I wish I could be with you to see that you were moderate and wise in your sorrow. You have had the happiness never to lose a child, but it is one of the conditions attached to our human wretchedness. Let me hear that you are reasonable, and that you keep well. Would you add to my pain ?[19]

Several successive letters are filled with consolations ; we extract these words addressed to Hortense :

'Take care of your health, try to distract your thoughts, and remember that life is strewn with so many difficulties, and may be the source of so many evils, that perhaps death is not the greatest of all.'[20]

It was not until the celebrated interview at Tilsit that the correspondence between Napoleon and Joséphine resumed its ordinary tone. The memorable meeting of the three Emperors has given rise to various hyperbolical narratives. We shall see from the pen of the principal actor in this

[18] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. cxxiii., Finkenstein, May 12, 1807.

[19] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. cxxiv., Finkenstein, May 14, 1807.

[20] *Ibid.*, t. i. (to the Queen of Holland), Finkenstein, May 20, 1807.

great event, formerly a humble sub-lieutenant of artillery, now courted by the heirs of the oldest monarchies of Europe, how simple it was when stripped of all exaggeration and reduced to its ordinary proportions:

'My friend, I have just seen the Emperor Alexander, and was very pleased with him. He is a very fine, strong, handsome young man; he has more wit than is commonly thought. He is coming to lodge in Tilsit to-morrow.'[21]

'My dearest, Monsieur de Turenne will give you all the details of what is happening here. I think I told you that the Emperor of Russia drank your health very graciously. He and the King of Prussia dine with me every day. I hope that you are happy. Good-bye, my dearest; a thousand loves.'[22]

'The beautiful Queen of Prussia dined with me yesterday. I had to defend myself, as she wished to compel me to make further concessions to her husband; but I was quite gallant, and stood to my policy. She is very pleasant. I will give you details later that would be impossible to tell you without being too long. By the time you read this, peace with Prussia and Russia will be concluded, and Jerôme recognized King of West-

[21] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. cxxxvi., Tilsit, June 25, 1807.

[22] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. cxxxvii., Tilsit, July 3, 1807.

phalia, with three millions of subjects. This news is for yourself alone.'[23]

'I reached Dresden yesterday at five in the afternoon, very well, although I remained a hundred hours in my carriage without getting down. I am staying with the King of Saxony, with whom I am much pleased. So I am half-way on my journey back to you. It may be that I shall come to Saint Cloud like a jealous husband one of these fine nights; I warn you.'[24]

During the years 1808 and 1809, we find Napoleon taking part in the war in Spain, then at the interview between the sovereigns at Erfurt, and finally at his last campaign in Austria, terminating with the battle of Wagram.

'I have arrived here well, but a little tired, as the road is dull and very bad. I am glad that you did not come, as the houses are bad and very small. I am going to move into a country house to-day about half a league from the town.'[25]

'The Infant Don Charles and five or six grandees of Spain are here, the Prince of the Asturias about twenty leagues off. King Charles and the Queen are just coming. I know not where to put up all these people. They are all still at the inn. It took me a minute or two to

[23] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. cxxxix., Tilsit, July 7, 1807.
[24] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. cxl., Dresden, July 18, 1807.
[25] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. cxliv., Bayonne, April 16, 1808.

understand your jokes; I laughed over your recollections. You women have wonderful memories. Pray remember me to my friends at Bordeaux; I am too busy to do anything myself.'[26]

'I had the Prince of the Asturias and his court to dinner yesterday. It gave me a great deal of trouble.'[27]

'I have just been shooting over the battle-field of Jéna. We breakfasted on the spot where I passed the night in a tent. I was present at the ball at Weimar. The Emperor Alexander dances; I do not. When one is forty one is forty.'[28]

'Everything is going on well. I am pleased with Alexander, and think he ought to be with me. Were he a woman, I think I should make love to him. I shall be with you shortly; see that I find you looking plump and well.'[29]

'I have received your letter. Pray tell me what mean the reforms that Hortense is making. They say she is sending away servants. Do they refuse her what is necessary? Tell me about it; reforms are not suitable.'[30]

'I shall come to Paris as soon as I think it

[26] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. ii., No. cxlv., Bayonne, April 17, 1808.

[27] *Ibid.*, t. ii., Bayonne, April 21, 1808.

[28] *Ibid.*, t. ii., No. cxlix., Erfurt, October 9, 1808.

[29] *Ibid.*, t. ii., No. cl., Erfurt, no date.

[30] *Ibid.*, t. ii., No. clvii., Chammartin (near Madrid), December 10, 1808.

advisable. I warn you to beware of ghosts: some fine day, at two in the morning. . . .'[31]

'I have written that you may go to Plombières. I do not care about your going to Baden. The death of the Duke of Montebello, which occurred this morning, has much grieved me. Thus finishes everything! ! !'

'I have received your letter of the 16th. I see that you are well. The house (*Boispréau, belonging to Mdlle. Julien*) is not worth more than 120,000 francs (£4,800); they will never get more for it. However, I leave you absolute mistress to do as you please; but when once you have bought it, do not go and pull it down to make room for a rockery.'[32]

'I have received your letter. Be careful, and take care of yourself at night, for very shortly you will hear a great noise. . . .'[33]

[31] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. ii., No. clxiv., Valladolid, January 9, 1809.

[32] *Ibid.*, t. ii., No. clxxv., Schönbrunn, September 23, 1809.

[33] *Ibid.*, t. ii., No. clxxvi., Schönbrunn, September 25, 1809.

IX.

Napoleon's Letters to Joséphine—What he calls his Business—Simple Stories of the Pomp of History.

The further one advances in this study, the more one must recognize that, in Napoleon, the private individual cannot be judged by the standard of the public man. It is clear, from the letters quoted above, that his style in private correspondence has nothing in common with that used in official documents.

His proclamations, his announcements of victory, have remained as models of military ardour, of which one might expect to find some reflection in his personal letters. But such is not the case. When he writes to the Empress of his successes in war, one could fancy that he was a good merchant writing home to his wife about a piece of business successfully carried through; to him they are *matters of business* which succeed more or less well. Thus, for example, writing after the taking of Augsburg, he says: 'We have opened

the campaign with some fairly remarkable successes.'[1] After the entry of the French into Munich: 'The enemy have been beaten, have lost their head, and all foretells me a successful campaign, the shortest and most brilliant I have yet achieved.'[2] After the victory at Elchingen, and the surrender of Ulm: 'I have carried out my design. I have destroyed the Austrian Army by simple marches. I have taken 120,000 prisoners, 120 pieces of cannon, more than ninety flags, and thirty generals. I am going to attack the Russians now; they are done for. I am pleased with my army. Good-bye, my Joséphine; everything kind to everybody.'[3]

When within three days' march of Vienna, after a series of combats which always ended in fresh victories, Napoleon writes: 'My business is going on satisfactorily. My enemies must have more cares than I. Good-bye, my Joséphine; I am going to bed.'[4]

Some expansion, some pride, was permissible, when for the first time he entered a great capital as conqueror; but that event only inspired Napoleon with these simple words: 'I have been

[1] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. xl., Augsburg, October 10, 1805.

[2] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. xli., October 12, 1805.

[3] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. xlii., Elchingen, October 19, 1805.

[4] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. xlvi., Haag, November 3, 1805.

now two days in Vienna, my dearest. I am a little fatigued. I have not yet seen the city by day, but went through it hastily one night. To-morrow I receive the notables and leading people.'[5] This is the manner in which he announces the battle of Austerlitz: 'I have beaten the Russian and Austrian armies, commanded by the two Emperors. I am a little tired, as I have bivouacked for the last week out of doors, and the nights have been rather cold. I sleep to-night in the house of the Prince von Kaunitz, and hope to get two or three hours' rest.'[6] Two days later the Emperor of Austria asks for peace, and Napoleon writes: 'I saw the Emperor of Germany yesterday in my tent, and we talked for two hours. We have agreed to make peace quickly.'

On the eve of the battle of Jéna, amidst the innumerable worries by which he is assailed, the Emperor, writing to Joséphine at two o'clock in the morning, says:

'I am now at Gera, my dearest; things are going as well as I could wish. With God's help, I think they will take in a few days a terrible shape for the poor King of Prussia, whom I pity personally, as he is a very good man. The Queen is at Erfurt with the King. If she wishes

[5] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. xlviii., Vienna, November 15, 1805.

[6] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. l., Austerlitz, December 3, 1805.

to see a battle, she will have that cruel pleasure. I am wonderfully well.'[7]

'I have carried out good manœuvres against the Prussians.'[8] Such is the modest opening to Napoleon's letter the day after the battle of Jéna. He continues:

'I have gained a great victory: there were 150,000 men against me; I have taken 20,000 prisoners, 100 pieces of cannon, and some flags. I was in presence of, and near to, the King of Prussia. I nearly took him prisoner, and the Queen as well. I have slept out of doors the last two nights. I am wonderfully well.'[9]

If he felt any legitimate pride at entering the palace of Frederick the Great at Potsdam, there is no trace of it to be found in his letter. 'I have been at Potsdam, my dearest, since yesterday, and shall remain there to-day. I am still satisfied with my business. My health is good and the weather fine. I think Sans Souci a charming place. Good-bye, my friend. Everything kind to Hortense and to Monsieur Napoleon.'[10]

Not a word about his triumphal entry into Berlin; his first letter dated from there begins:

[7] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. lviii., Gera, October 13, 1805, 2 in the morning.

[8] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. lix., Jéna, October 15, 1806, 3 in the morning.

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. lxii., Potsdam, October 24, 1806.

'The weather here is magnificent; we have not had a drop of rain during the whole campaign. I am very well, and all is going famously. Good-bye; I have had a letter from Monsieur Napoleon; I do not believe it is from him, but from Hortense.'[11]

The taking of Stettin, Magdeburg, and Lübeck, and the entry into Warsaw, are all announced with the same simplicity. The day after the battle of Eylau he writes:

'We had a great battle yesterday; the victory remained with me, but I have lost many men. The enemy's losses, more considerable still, do not console me. I send you these two lines myself, although I am much fatigued, just to let you know that I am well and that I love you."[12]

Here is his account of the battle of Friedland:

'My dearest, I only send you one word, as I am very tired. I have been bivouacking for many nights. My children have worthily kept the anniversary of Marengo (Marengo June 14, 1800, Friedland June 14, 1807).

'The battle of Friedland will be as celebrated and as glorious for my people. I successfully out-

[11] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. lxiii., Berlin, November 1, 1806, 2 in the morning.

[12] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. xciv., Eylau, February 9, 1807, 3 in the morning.

manœuvred the enemy. Do not be uneasy, but be happy. Good-bye; my horse waits.'[13]

From Spain, just before setting out to fight the English, he writes:

'I am just starting to outdo the English, who seem to have received reinforcements and to be inclined to swagger in consequence.'[14]

The last victory which he had to report before the divorce was that of Wagram, and he thus expresses himself:

'I send you one page to tell you the good news of the battle of Ebersdorf, which I won on the 5th, and of that of Wagram, which I won on the 6th. The enemy's army is fleeing in disorder, and all is going as well as possible. I am burned by the sun. Good-bye, dearest; I embrace you. My best love to Hortense.'[15]

[13] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. cxxxii., Friedland, June 15, 1807.

[14] *Ibid.*, t. ii., No. clxix., Madrid, December 22, 1808.

[15] *Ibid.*, t. ii., No. clxxv., Ebersdorf, July 7, 1809.

X.

Married Life at the Tuileries—Affection for Hortense de Beauharnais and her Children—Uncle Bibiche—Refutation of an Infamous Calumny.

FROM these letters, one can easily picture what the domestic life of the writer was like. Napoleon was a peaceful husband, desiring tranquillity at home above everything. He himself said to Roederer: 'If I found no pleasures in my home life I should be too miserable.'[1]

'Once the quarrels of the first years were over,' says Thibaudeau, 'it was, on the whole, a happy household.'[2]

'The Emperor,' says Mdlle. Avrillon,[3] 'was, in reality, one of the best husbands I have ever known. When the Empress was poorly, he passed near her every hour that he could spare from his work. He always went into her room before going to bed, and very often, when he woke in the night, he would send his mameluke

[1] Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 515.
[2] Thibaudeau, 'Consulat,' t. i., p. 19.
[3] Mdlle. Avrillon, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 203.

for news of her Majesty, or else come himself. He was tenderly attached to her.'

'How touching was the peace that reigned in the Imperial household!' says Constant. 'The Emperor was full of attentions for his wife, and used to amuse himself by kissing her on the neck and the cheeks, tapping her face, and calling her his "great stupid."'[4]

The same eye-witnesses, valet and lady's-maid, people for whom domestic life has no secrets, shall complete for us the picture of this Imperial household, where all ordinary habits have taken root.

'The Emperor,' says Mdlle. Avrillon, 'continued, as when he was First Consul, to share the Empress's bedroom; after the consecration he slept in his own, and it was only occasionally that husband and wife came together. There was a secret staircase by which the Emperor descended from his apartment to that of the Empress. As he rose very early, he often used to come down before his wife was up.

At other times, as he liked to go to bed very early, he used to send for her as soon as he was in bed, and then the Empress quitted everything in order to obey the smallest desires of her husband, which she was in the habit of regarding as orders. The Emperor was very fond of talking to her, and their conversations used to last for

[4] Constant,' 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 115.

hours. She often read new books to him; he liked her to read to him, as she read admirably and much enjoyed reading aloud. When the Emperor showed an inclination to go to sleep, the Empress used to descend a little staircase and rejoin the company in the drawing-room just as she had left them.'[5]

'When the Emperor,' says Constant,[6] 'intended to pass the night with his wife, he used to undress in his own room, whence he went out clad in a dressing-gown with a silk handkerchief on his head. I walked before him, candlestick in hand. At the end of the corridor was a staircase of fifteen or sixteen steps, leading to Joséphine's apartment. It was a great pleasure to her to receive a visit from the Emperor; the whole house knew of it next day.

'I can see her now, rubbing her little hands, and saying to all who came near her: "I was rather late in getting up this morning, but, you see, Bonaparte came to pass the night with me."'

We know that, having no children of his own, 'he served as father to those of his wife, and,' adds Thibaudeau, 'he could not have been fonder of them.'[7] The Emperor liked talking about his domestic virtues, whether he was really proud of them, or whether he wished to set an example.

[5] Mdlle. Avrillon, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 124.
[6] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 130. [7] 'Consulat,' p. 26.

'At home,' he said to Roederer, 'I am an affectionate man; I play with the children, talk to my wife, read novels to them.'[8]

Joséphine adored her two children, Eugène and Hortense de Beauharnais. Napoleon, true to his promise, gave them an affection which never failed; they could always consider the Imperial palace as their home.

The children of Hortense were no less spoiled by the Emperor than by their grandmother. Napoleon was always at his best in the familiarity of daily life.

'Uncle Bibiche! Uncle Bibiche!' This exclamation came from a child of scarcely five years of age, running breathlessly in the park of Saint-Cloud after a man visible in the distance followed by a troop of gazelles, to whom he was distributing pinches of snuff, disputed eagerly. The child was the eldest son of Hortense, and the distributor of snuff was Napoleon, who had earned the name of 'Uncle Bibiche' by the pleasure that he took in setting the boy on the back of one of the gazelles and walking him about, to the intense joy of the child, who was carefully held on by his uncle.

The Emperor loved all children, and was devoted to this one in particular. He often took him on his knee at luncheon-time, and amused

[8] Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 542.

himself by making him eat lentils one at a time. The impertinences that the Emperor permitted to the little Napoleon form the subject of a celebrated picture by Gérard, in which the Sovereign is represented followed by his nephew, dragging after him the Imperial sword and wearing the legendary little hat.[9]

The child, it appears, was charming, and, moreover, possessed of great admiration for his uncle. When he passed in front of the grenadiers in the Tuileries gardens, the boy would call out: 'Long live grandpapa, the soldier!'[10]

'It used to be,' says Mdlle. Avrillon, 'a real holiday for the Emperor, when Queen Hortense came to see her mother, bringing her two children. Napoleon would take them in his arms, caress them, often tease them, and burst into laughter, as if he had been their own age, when, according to his custom, he had smeared their faces with cream or jam.'[11]

Not even a good feeling can escape malevolence. What! the Emperor could feel a pure affection for the daughter of his wife and for the little children who, as a matter of fact, were his direct nephews, being the children of his brother Louis Bonaparte. Impossible! exclaim the back-

9 Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., pp. 236-238.
10 Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 515.
11 Mdlle. Avrillon, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 151.

biters, and, in their determination to run down everything, they explain these feelings by the most monstrous hypothesis imaginable: 'Napoleon was the lover of his wife's daughter, of the wife of his brother Louis!'

This is a piece of gratuitous infamy, easy to invent, not less easy to propagate when one declines the trouble of adducing any proof.

Fouché, the man capable of every abomination, has taken pleasure in repeating this disgusting story without circumlocution, and has even added that it was Joséphine who encouraged her daughter to receive Bonaparte's attentions.[12]

Nevertheless, it has been necessary to defend the Emperor's memory against this abominable accusation. Even his enemies themselves, with Bourrienne at their head, have come forward with a formal denial.

'They lie in their throats,' he says, 'who pretend that Bonaparte had for Hortense any feeling except those of a stepfather for his stepdaughter.'[13]

Madame de Rémusat herself, speaking of Hortense, says: 'The manner in which the Emperor used to speak of her gives an absolute denial to the accusations of which she was the object.'[14]

The most intimate witnesses of Napoleon's

[12] Fouché, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 315.
[13] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. iv., p. 322.
[14] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 133.

domestic life are not less affirmative in the same sense.

'The lying rumours,' says Mdlle. Avrillon, 'which were going about respecting an imaginary intimacy between the First Consul and his step-daughter are of the class of those that one must not even refute, lest one should give them an importance that they do not merit. People alone who had been actors in, or witnesses of, the debaucheries of the reign of Louis XV., could put any faith in them.'[15]

Again, we read in the memoirs of Madame Durand, wife of the General of that name:

'It is certain that Napoleon was never on too intimate terms with Hortense de Beauharnais, whom he loved as he did Eugène, because they were the children of his wife.'[16]

'I can declare upon my honour,' says Constant,[17] 'that the infamous desires attributed to him never entered his head. When Hortense wanted a favour, she always had recourse to the secretaries and immediate surroundings of the Emperor. Would she have done this had there been the smallest foundation for the horrible rumours set afloat by his and her enemies?'

Even without these irrefutable witnesses, how

15 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 152.

16 'Mémoires de la Générale Durand,' p. 2.

17 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 92.

can anyone dare to imagine that that man, so penetrated with a sense of family duty, jealous both of the glory and of the respectability of the name of Bonaparte, should have become, all of a sudden, so devoid of moral decency as to marry his mistress, daughter of his wife, to his favourite brother, to the very one to whom he had almost been a father, and whom he had brought up on his meagre pittance as a subaltern?

Finally, why should not the Emperor have been just as fond of Hortense as he was of Joséphine's other child, Eugène de Beauharnais?

There was in Napoleon, side by side with real affection, a constant determination to carry out his obligations, and to keep the promise he had made of giving fatherly protection to the children of his wife.

XI.

Paternal Affection for Eugène—His Marriage—The Emperor's Care for the New Establishment—Affection for Eugène's Wife.

In all points Napoleon was the best of fathers for Eugène. Here are his special recommendations to the young man during the campaign in Egypt:

'Always march with the infantry. Do not trust the Arabs; and sleep under a tent. Write to me at every opportunity. I love you.'[1]

'Remember not to sleep in the open air, or with your eyes uncovered. I embrace you.'[2]

On his side, Eugène evinced his gratitude for Napoleon's kindness by showing himself careful for and devoted to him.

'If a cannon be fired, Eugène goes to see what it is,' says the First Consul. 'If I have a ditch to cross, he gives me his hand.'[3]

[1] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. v., p. 205, No. 3,751, Headquarters, Cairo, December 11, 1798.

[2] *Ibid.*, t. v., p. 211, No. 3,761, Headquarters, Cairo, December 16, 1798.

[3] Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 515.

He used constantly to quote him as a model for all the young men of his age.[4]

When the interests of the service appeared to require it, Napoleon sometimes scolded Eugène very severely, as for instance: 'I do not know how to express my displeasure with you,' but in every case, after these reproaches, we find a sentence intended to soften them, such as: 'Do not believe, however, that this prevents me from doing justice to the goodness of your heart.'[5]

Were not all the little unpleasantnesses, consequent upon his situation, that the Viceroy of Italy had to endure, made up to him when the Emperor wrote:

'Nothing could add to my feelings for you; my heart knows nothing more dear to it than you. These feelings are unalterable. Every time I see you display talent, or that I hear good accounts of you, my heart experiences a very pleasant feeling of satisfaction'?[6]

Or when he received from his adopted father presents that were priceless?—

'My son, I send you for a New Year's gift a

[4] Mdlle. Avrillon, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 308.

[5] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xi., p. 68, No. 9,053, Camp at Boulogne, August 6, 1805, to Prince Eugène.

[6] *Ibid.*, t. xii., p. 193, No. 9,979, to Prince Eugène, Paris, March 15, 1806.

sword that I wore on the battlefields of Italy. I hope it will bring you good luck.'[7]

Eugène's inflexible chief was also a devoted friend, as we see from this letter :

'My son, I cannot say that I think much either of Monsieur Calmelet, or of your architect ; I have sent them both away. It is absurd to spend 1,500,000 francs (£60,000) upon a house so small as yours, and the work that they have done in it is not worth a quarter of the sum. Be careful to do nothing without having estimates beforehand. Do not, however, trouble about your house ; I put an embargo on it. Whenever you come to Paris you will, of course, live in my palace.'[8]

When the question arose of the marriage between Prince Eugène and Augusta, daughter of the King of Bavaria, the Emperor settled all difficulties by adopting the bridegroom.[9] The notice to the Senate is dated February 1, 1805 ; but the official proposal and the marriage were postponed in consequence of the occupations of the Emperor, who wished to be present at the wedding ceremony, which was celebrated on January 14, 1806.

[7] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xvi., p. 227, No. 13,428, Paris, January 3, 1808.

[8] *Ibid.*, t. xii., p. 63, No. 9,845, Paris, January 18, 1806.

[9] Mdlle. Avrillon, t. i., p. 308.

Hear how Napoleon spoke to the young wife of his adopted son immediately after the marriage:

'The feelings that I entertain for you will only increase as time goes on. Amid all my affairs, none will ever be dearer to me than those which can tend to secure the happiness of my children. Believe, Augusta, that I love you as a father, and that I expect you to show me a daughter's devotion. Take care of yourself on your journey, and especially in the new climate to which you are going. Remember that I do not wish you to be ill. I conclude, my child, by giving you my paternal blessing.'[10]

Everything in the young establishment interests him; his solicitude even becomes indiscreet curiosity sometimes.

'Everything affectionate to the Princess,' he writes to Eugène. 'I am most anxious to know how she bore the journey and her new experiences. Tell her how much I love her.'[11]

The interest he takes in the young couple is constantly present in Napoleon's letters, and one can always trace the kind father who thinks of nothing but the happiness of his children:

'My daughter, I cannot say how delighted I

[10] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xi., p. 546, No. 9,683, to Princess Augusta, Stuttgard, January 19, 1806.

[11] *Ibid.*, t. xi., p. 560, No. 9,712, to Prince Eugène, Paris, January 27, 1806.

am at the assurance of happiness contained in your letter. I have ordered a little library of books to be arranged for you. I hope that the Empress will send you some fashions, and that you will also tell me what I can send you to assure you that I am thinking of you, and of what can give pleasure to you and Eugène. Let your purse always be open to the wives and children of soldiers; nothing you could do would touch me more deeply.'[12]

'I send you my portrait, as a proof of my esteem and affection. I have heard with great pleasure all the good that has been said of you. Tell Eugène how much I love him, and how glad I am to know that you are both happy.'[13]

Above all things, the Emperor wished that his son's wife should be happy. With this object, the man always so severe with respect to hard work derogated from his principles:

'My son, you work too hard; your life is too monotonous. It is all very well for you. But you have a wife who is enceinte. . . . Why do you not go to the theatre once a week in the large box? I think you must have a little hunting establishment, too. I will willingly arrange a sum in my budget for the purpose. You want

[12] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xii., p. 12, No. 9,759, Paris, February 5, 1806.

[13] *Ibid.*, t. xii., p. 101, No. 9,887, Paris, February 25, 1806.

more gaiety in your house; it is necessary for your wife's happiness and for your health. We can get through much work in little time. I lead the life that you lead, but, then, I have an old wife who can amuse herself without me, and, besides, I have more to do. A young woman needs to be amused, especially in her present condition.'[14]

During Eugène's absence, the Emperor hastens to console the Princess:

'My daughter, I know how solitary you must feel, left all alone in the middle of Lombardy; but Eugène will soon come back to you, and we never realize that we love until we are separated, or until we see the absent one again. We only appreciate health when we have a headache, or when we have just got rid of one. Besides, it is useful, for many reasons, to see a little of the world, and to move about. I am always delighted to have news of you, and inquire of everyone who comes from that part of the country, and I learn with pleasure that everyone regards you as perfect.—Your affectionate father.'[15]

Is it not wonderful that the Emperor should have found time to write such a letter as this at

[14] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xii., p. 285, No. 10,099. Saint Cloud, April 14, 1806.

[15] *Ibid.*, t. xii., p. 427, No. 10,308, Saint Cloud, June 3, 1806.

the very moment when he was elaborating the campaign which, after Jéna, was to lead him to Berlin?

His advice to the Princess, who at that time was enceinte, is no less wonderful:

'My daughter, you are right in counting absolutely upon my love for you. Take care of yourself in your present condition, and try not to give us a daughter. I will give you a recipe for that, but you will not believe me. It is to drink, every day, a little wine without water.'[16]

Immediately after the confinement, he wrote to Eugène in order to soothe any disappointment the young couple might feel:

'Is Augusta vexed at not having a boy? Tell her that when people begin with a girl they always have a dozen children.'[17]

The Emperor's conduct to Eugène and his wife never altered. When, in 1814, he proposed that the Princess should come to Paris for her confinement, at that unfortunate moment when all sorts of undefined apprehensions provoked in everyone an extreme irritability of nerves, his invitation was, unfortunately, badly received. Napoleon, indignant, explained his intentions in these words:

[16] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xiii., p. 122, No. 10,718, Saint Cloud, August 31, 1806.

[17] *Ibid.*, t. xv., p. 68, No. 12,368, Finkenstein, April 18, 1807.

'My son, I have received a letter from you, and one from the Vicereine, which are wild; you must have taken leave of your senses. It was from a feeling of dignity that I wished that the Princess should come to Paris for her confinement, and I know she is too susceptible to decide upon remaining in her state among the Austrians. Nothing in the world could have been simpler than for her to come to her family, and have her confinement quietly over in the place where there is the smallest amount of uneasiness. You must be mad to think that this has anything to do with politics.'[18]

In the midst of his own distresses, Napoleon can still find affectionate words in which to forgive his daughter-in-law the unkind thoughts she had expressed:

'My daughter, I have received your letter. As I know the sensibility of your heart and the vivacity of your temper, I am not surprised at the manner in which you were struck. Acknowledge your injustice, and I will leave it to your own heart to punish you.'[19]

[18] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxvii., p. 307, No. 21,472, to Eugène Napoleon, Soissons, March 12, 1814.

[19] *Ibid.*, t. xxvii., p. 308, No. 21,473, Soissons, March 12, 1814.

XII.

The Emperor and Empress—Joséphine's Extravagance—Daily Discussions—A Dressmaker in Prison.

Not only was Napoleon able to detach himself from public matters so as to give himself up to these domestic trifles, but he found time to put into practice the little whims that are dear to husbands who have not much work. When Joséphine was to appear in public, he was anxious about her dress, and used himself to go and see what she was wearing.

'The Emperor,' says Mdlle. Avrillon, 'used sometimes to assist at the Empress's toilet, and it was strange to us to see a man whose head was so full of great things, going into all sorts of details and pointing out the gowns or the jewels he wished her to wear on such and such occasions. He one day spilled some ink over one of the Empress's gowns because he did not like it, and to force her to put on another; when he touched the jewel-cases he upset everything.'[1]

[1] Mdlle. Avrillon, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 98.



'On the morning of the consecration,' says the Duchesse d'Abrantès,[2] 'the Emperor himself tried on the Empress the crown she was to wear. During the ceremony he was most attentive to her, arranged this little crown, which surmounted a coronet of diamonds, altered it, replaced it, and moved it again.'

No married couple can live together without having some subject of constant discussion. Between Joséphine and Napoleon this subject was the reckless extravagance of the Empress. Never, notwithstanding his severest remonstrances, could he, who had established the most vigorous exactitude in his vast empire, induce his wife to moderate her love of spending money, or even to keep within the limits of any budget.

'Napoleon,' says Count Mollien,[3] 'could not bear that the Empress should have any debts; he reproached her for them, but always ended by paying, saying aloud that he forbade anyone to approach the palace who could tempt her fancy or surprise her good-nature, but of all his orders those were the ones that received least compliance.'

'The Emperor,' says Mdlle. Avrillon,[4] reproached the Empress for never counting the cost. She had not the courage to send away a

[2] 'Mémoires,' t. v., pp. 163-179. [3] *Ibid.*, t. iii., p. 352.

[4] *Ibid.*, t. i., p. 206; Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. vi., p. 268.



shopman without buying anything from him. She frequently bought very expensive and absolutely useless things, simply for the pleasure of buying. Then she had to go to the Emperor for money. He finished by paying, but always after scenes so angry that they almost amounted to violence. The Emperor lost his temper; the Empress cried; then peace was made again after these scenes, which were so painful to the Empress that she always made firm resolutions not to give rise to them again; but her natural inclinations were too strong for her, and she always began anew.'

Constant, too, says that the 'terrible waste that went on in the Empress's household was a continual annoyance to Napoleon, and he forbade admission to several shopkeepers whom he knew by experience to be disposed to abuse the Empress's confidence.'[5]

We find, further, this remark in Sismondi:[6]

'Joséphine was extraordinarily careless about money matters. She was always surrounded by people who robbed her; she denied herself no whim, never reckoned the cost, and allowed prodigious debts to accumulate. It happened on one occasion, when the settlement of the budget was approaching, that Napoleon saw the eyes of

[5] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. iv., p. 183.
[6] 'Revue Historique,' t. ix., p. 366.

Joséphine and of Madame de la Rochefoucauld (principal lady-in-waiting) very red. He said to Duroc: "These women have been crying; try to find out what it is about." Duroc discovered that there was a deficit of 600,000 francs (£24,000). Napoleon, incredulous, immediately wrote an order for 1,000,000 francs (£40,000), and exclaimed: "All this for miserable trifles! Simply stolen by a lot of scoundrels! I must send away so and so, and forbid certain shopkeepers to present themselves at the palace."'

As Mollien has told us, the Emperor's prohibition in this matter was of no avail.

One day, worn out with the determination displayed to disregard his will, he did as husbands often do when they find themselves powerless to correct their wives—he allowed his anger to fall upon a third person. He gave orders for the arrest, for the sake of example merely, of Mdlle. Despréaux, a milliner, and she spent several hours in Bicêtre prison![7] This little act of domestic authority gained for him plentiful abuse. He was even reminded that the Revolution had abolished *lettres de cachet!* Certainly a great fuss was made over a husband who was not master in his own house, and a milliner who had dared to disobey the orders of an Emperor!

Wherever Napoleon went, he bore with him

[7] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. iv., p. 183.

the recollection of his wife's extravagance. Did not this trouble betray itself in his speech to the Council of State?

'Women think of nothing but dress and pleasure. Could not we add to the law that a woman should see no one displeasing to her husband? Women always have these words in their mouth: "You prevent me from seeing whom I like."'[8]

[8] Thibaudeau, 'Consulat,' p. 436: words used by Napoleon at the Council of State, 5 Vendémiaire.

XIII.

Napoleon's Mistresses—Actresses—Supplanted by a Musician —The Ladies-in-Waiting—The Companions.

WAS Napoleon always a rigorous observer of conjugal fidelity as it is prescribed by strict morality?

We know not how it might have been if, at the beginning of their married life, Joséphine had known how to preserve the love that Napoleon bore her. But the fact remains that, as a result of the condition of affairs created by her, first by her coldness, and then by her faults—a condition of things that had reduced to friendly affection and a force of habit the bond which kept her husband near her—he became an easy prey to the demon of unfaithfulness.

There is no doubt that Napoleon had mistresses; but—and this fact accentuates his middle-class prejudices—instead of imitating Henry IV., Francis I., Louis XIV., and Louis XV., his predecessors, the Emperor took every possible precaution to prevent his in-

timacies from becoming known to his wife, his Court, and the public.

Born in obscurity, he preserved sufficient respect for supreme power not to lower it. We do not find, during his reign, one single instance of a concubine having the very smallest influence in the councils of the State, or in the distribution of privileges and appointments in the gift of the monarch.

In proportion as the glory and importance of her husband increased, Joséphine's love for him increased also, till at last she became 'furiously jealous.'

The first woman who gave her cause for this jealousy was, says Lucien Bonaparte in his memoirs,[1] 'Madame Branchu, of the Opera, a very plain woman, but a magnificent singer.'

Napoleon's attention seems to have been retained rather longer by another pensionary of a theatre receiving a State grant, namely, Mdlle. Georges, of the Comédie Française. She was at that time a magnificent woman, of surpassing beauty.

'Mdlle. Georges was supposed to be handsomely provided for by the First Consul; he did not advertise the connection, but it was talked about in high places.'[2]

[1] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. ii., p. 262.
[2] *Ibid.*, t. ii., p. 366.

'Her conversation,' says Constant,[3] 'pleased and amused him very much, and I have often heard him laugh very heartily at the anecdotes with which Mdlle. Georges seasoned her interviews with him.'

Napoleon had less amusement from Madame Grassini, a singer who had formerly charmed him at Milan 'by her theatrical beauty, and still more by the sublime sound of her voice,' says Fouché. The Emperor made her come to Paris.

'Very richly endowed,' continues the same author, 'with 15,000 francs (£600) a month, she shone at the theatre, and at the Court concerts, where her voice created a great impression. But the Chief of the State avoided all scandal, and, wishing to give Joséphine, who was furiously jealous, no cause of umbrage, he only paid her short and furtive visits. A love without any attentions was not calculated to please a passionate and haughty woman, who quickly fell in love with the violinist Rode,[4] with whom eventually she fled from Paris.'[5]

This prank seems to have disgusted the Emperor for ever with theatrical people. We

[3] 'Mémoires,' t. vi., p. 123.

[4] Fouché, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 233; Durand, 'Mémoires,' p. 89.

[5] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. iv., p. 167; Mdlle. Avrillon, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 91; Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. vi., p. 124.

find no further mention of them in the gallant annals of his reign.

The flighty feelings of the Sovereign fixed themselves rather upon the ladies-in-waiting, or the companions of the Empress's household. In this category are quoted 'Madame de Vanay, at that time a very beautiful woman; she attracted the attention of the Emperor, but her term of favour was of short duration.'[6]

Then followed his liaison with Madame D——, whose anonymity, respected both by the Duchesse d'Abrantès[7] and by Constant, has been revealed in full by Lewis Goldsmith in his pamphlet. It was Madame Duchâtel, wife of a Councillor of State.[8]

'Her husband was already old,' says Madame d'Abrantès, 'and might have been her father.'

'Napoleon,' says Constant, 'fell very much in love with Madame D—— He did all he could to quiet Joséphine's conjugal mistrust. He used not to join his mistress until everyone in the palace was asleep, and even went so far in his precautions as to pass barefoot from one apartment to the other. Nevertheless, as he feared a surprise, he

[6] Mdlle. Avrillon, t. i., p. 91.

[7] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. v., pp. 158, 216; Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 67.

[8] Lewis Goldsmith, 'Secret History of the Cabinet of Napoleon I. and of the Court of Saint-Cloud,' vol. i., p. 98, London and Paris, 1814.

ordered me to hire for him a little house in the Allée des Veuves, and there he and Madame D—— used to meet.'[9]

Here and there he had an ephemeral caprice for one of the Empress's companions — about three in all;[10] then came his intimacy with Madame Gazani, a very beautiful Genoese—an intimacy which, according to Constant, lasted about a year, with meetings only at rare intervals. There remained, however, the one real passion that he ever experienced in his conjugal infidelities.

[9] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 68.
[10] Mdlle. Avrillon, 'Mémoires,' t. i., pp. 211, 290.

XIV.

Pretty Women in Poland—Joséphine's Jealousy—The Husband's Subterfuges—Beginning of an Idyll—Letters of a Guilty Husband.

BETWEEN the battle of Jéna (October 13, 1806), and the battle of Eylau (February 8, 1807), the Emperor had occupied Poland.

In France the reputation of the Polish women was great, and poor Joséphine, as though feeling a presentiment of imminent danger, was tortured night and day by her bitter jealousy. She who, formerly, had opposed such strenuous resistance to joining her husband in Italy, now wrote letter after letter asking him to let her join him in Poland. With feverish impatience she waited for a word from the master appointing a rendezvous in some town.

'Every evening,' says the Duchesse d'Abrantès,[1] 'she used to consult the cards in order to learn whether she would receive the desired orders or not.'

[1] 'Mémoires,' t. vii.

Among all the pretty women who surrounded him, the Emperor was not very anxious for the arrival of his wife; he let her hope that they would meet ere long, and, while he tried to turn her suspicions, like a *bourgeois* who is contemplating an infidelity, he showed himself more tender, more affectionate towards her:

'All these Polish women are French, but to me there is but one woman in the world. Do you know her? I could paint her portrait for you, but should have to flatter her so much that you would not recognize yourself. The nights are very long all alone.'[2]

One can judge the wife's uneasiness from the husband's answers:

'I am sorry you have so bad an opinion of me. You tell me you must have dreamed it, and you add that you are not jealous. I have long noticed that when people are angry they declare that they are not angry, when they are afraid they declare that they are not. Thus you are convicted of jealousy, and I am delighted!'

Is there not, in these last words, a sort of hidden allusion to the past, when he was both so jealous and so wretched? However, he tries to reassure her, but his attempts are so exaggerated as to betray their insincerity.

[2] 'Letters of Napoleon to Joséphine,' t. i., No. lxxii., Posen, December 2, 1806.

'But you are wrong,' he says. 'I think of nothing less, and in the deserts of Poland one thinks little of beauties. The *noblesse* of the province gave a ball for me last night; very beautiful women, very rich, dressed in Paris fashions.'[3]

A desert where people give balls! Surely that image had its origin in a brain that was in great straits for want of explanations!

He invokes every possible reason for delaying the arrival of his wife, and entrenches himself behind superior force. He probably did not pen this grave aphorism without a sardonic smile:

'The greater one is, the less free will can one have. One depends upon circumstances and events.'

He makes no difficulties about her travelling so long as it is not to Poland. 'You may go to Frankfort or Darmstadt,' he says; then, returning to the implacable force of things, he adds: 'You pretty women know no barriers; what you wish, must be; but I am the greatest slave among men; my master is the nature of things.'[4]

This philosophical resignation, which would have pleased Joséphine so much in 1795, was not calculated to satisfy her ten years later, when

[3] 'Letters of Napoleon to Joséphine,' t. i., No. lxxiii., December 3, 1806.

[4] *Ibid.*, t. i., p. 214, No. lxxix., December 3, 1806, 6 in the evening.

she was so anxious to please Napoleon, when she was redoubling her attentions and sending him various objects of utility meant to prove her anxiety for his comfort :

'An officer brings me a carpet from you. It is rather short and narrow, but I thank you none the less for it.'[5]

Joséphine felt her mistrust and her torments increasing as she saw her approach to Napoleon delayed. She had a presentiment when she knew that he was close to Warsaw, and she was not mistaken. There was indeed a great temptation awaiting him there, whereof the consequences were eventually fatal to her.

Scarcely had he arrived in the capital of Poland, when he met the only woman who, in all his adventures, ever gave him a real love. At Warsaw he met the idyll of his life ; there only he realized the bliss of a love that is shared. Neither Joséphine, as we have seen, nor Maria-Louisa, as we shall see, cared for him as Madame Walewska did.

Napoleon first saw her at a ball given to him by the *noblesse* of Poland. He says of her : 'She was a charming woman, an angel ! One might say that her soul was as beautiful as her face.'[6]

[5] 'Letters of Napoleon to Joséphine,' t. i., No. lxxvii., December 10, 5 in the evening.

[6] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. iii., p. 104.

She was two-and-twenty, fair, with blue eyes and a skin of dazzling whiteness; she was not tall, but perfectly formed, with an exquisite figure. A slight shadow of melancholy lay on her whole person, and rendered her still more attractive. Recently married to an old noble with a bad temper and extremely rigid views, she seemed to Napoleon like a woman who has been sacrificed and who is unhappy at home. 'This idea increased the passionate interest the Emperor felt in her as soon as he saw her.'[7]

'The day after the ball the Emperor seemed to me in an unusually agitated state. He walked about the room, sat down, got up, and walked about again. Immediately after luncheon, he sent a great personage to visit Madame Walewska for him, and to present to her his homage and his entreaties. She proudly refused proposals made too brusquely, or was it perhaps the coquetry innate in woman that suggested to her to refuse?'[8]

The Polish lady could not long resist the temptation of becoming the mistress of a hero, still young (he was thirty-seven), and brilliant in his power and his glory. Napoleon wrote to her in language so tender and touching that she finished

[7] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 211; Duc de Rovigo, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 27.

[8] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 211.

by yielding, and promised to come and see the Emperor that night between ten and eleven o'clock.

'The Emperor, while waiting for her, walked about the room and displayed as much impatience as emotion. Every moment he inquired the time. Madame Walewska arrived at last, but in what a state!—pale, dumb, her eyes bathed in tears.'[9]

According to Constant, the first evening was given up to the confidences of Madame Walewska, who explained, according to custom, her domestic troubles, which were her excuse for throwing herself into the arms of a lover. She left at two in the morning, her handkerchief to her eyes and still weeping. No doubt her tears served to show her the way again, as once upon a time the white pebbles did for Hop-o'-my-Thumb, for 'she soon returned, stayed till a fairly early hour in the morning, and continued her visits till the Emperor left.'[10]

Napoleon did what any other husband would have done under the circumstances: he tried to prevent his wife from joining him; and, in order to bring this about, he invented material difficulties not discovered before that time:

'One must submit to things as they are. The

[9] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 212.
[10] *Ibid.*, t. iii.

journey from Mayence to Warsaw is too long. I think you had better return to Paris.'[11]

After the distance, he brings forward the weather, the state of the roads:

'My dearest, I am much touched by all you say, but the season is cold, the roads very bad and not safe, and I cannot expose you to so many fatigues and dangers. Return to Paris for the winter. Perhaps it will not be long before I shall join you there, but it is absolutely necessary that you should renounce a journey of three hundred leagues at this time of year, through hostile countries.'[12]

Several times over he returns to these arguments, which, on the whole, seem to him the best:

'The weather is too bad, the roads unsafe and detestable, and the distance too great for me to permit you to come here, where I am kept by business. It would take you at least a month to get here. You would arrive ill, and would have, perhaps, to start away again at once; it would be folly.'[13]

'The distance is too great; I cannot allow you to undertake such a journey at this time of year.'[14]

[11] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. lxxxii., Warsaw, January 3, 1807.

[12] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. lxxxiii., Warsaw, January 7, 1807.

[13] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. lxxxiv., Warsaw, January 8, 1807.

[14] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. lxxxv., Warsaw, January 11, 1807.

'It is out of the question for women to undertake such a journey; the roads are too bad, not safe, and very muddy.'[15]

'I share your sorrows and do not complain. But I could not allow you to expose yourself to dangers unsuited both to your rank and your sex.'[16]

This discouraging picture of what awaited her could not bring Joséphine to resignation. She hated Mayence, in spite of the affectionate assurances scattered about here and there in Napoleon's letters.

'Believe that it is as hard for me as it is for you to put off for a few weeks the pleasure of seeing you, but events and public affairs will it so. Good-bye, my dearest; be gay, and show your courage.'[17]

Hoping to induce her to leave him in peace, he was anxious to see her return to her pleasures.

'Your stay at Mayence is too dull. Paris wants you; go there. I wish it.'

And as he knows that his wife is suffering from jealousy, he adds: 'How I should like to be with you these long nights!'[18]

[15] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. lxxxix., Warsaw, January 23, 1807.

[16] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. xc., January 25, 1807.

[17] *Ibid.*, No. lxxxiii.

[18] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. lxxxiv., Warsaw, January 8, 1807.

He is perfectly aware of the pain he is causing to her, who has retained all his friendship, in default of the love that she once so wilfully rejected. However, he wishes her to be happy, and encourages her again to go to Paris, where her female vanity, having plenty of scope, may make her forget her apprehension.

'I wish you to be gay, and to give a little life to the capital.'[19]

'Why tears and sorrow? Have you no courage? Do not doubt my feelings, and if you wish to be still dearer to me, display courage and strength of mind. I wish to know that you are contented and happy.'[20]

'I wish you to have more strength. I am told you are always crying. Fie! how ugly that is! An Empress ought to be courageous.'[21]

'I am very unhappy at the tone of your letters, and at what I hear. I forbid you to cry, and to be unhappy and disturbed. I wish you to be gay, amiable, and happy.'[22]

'Return to Paris; be happy and contented; perhaps I shall be there before long. I laughed at reading in your letter that you had married in

[19] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. lxxxv., Warsaw, January 11, 1807.

[20] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. lxxxvi., January 16, 1807.

[21] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. lxxxvii., Warsaw, January 18, 1807.

[22] *Ibid.*, t. i., No. lxxxviii., Warsaw, January 19, 1807.

order to be with your husband. I thought, in my ignorance, that the wife was made for the husband; the husband for his country, his family, and glory. Forgive me for my ignorance; one always learns something from the fair sex. Believe me that I regret that I cannot let you come here. Say to yourself, It is a proof how precious I am to him.'[23]

We have been anxious to show how the Emperor subjected himself to scruples unknown in his rank before his time. If Joséphine, as a wife, had a reason for being hurt, she might, as Empress, console herself by remembering the Queens of France, whose place she occupied, and who had to endure the presence of favourites actually at Court.

The first chapter of the little romance begun at Warsaw ended with the departure of the Emperor, who had to go and take up the command of his army for the campaign of Eylau.

The love of Madame Walewska for Napoleon did not go out. After having given him a great pleasure by making him a father, she never occasioned him the smallest unpleasantness. She remained in shadow throughout the whole of the Imperial reign, and did not reappear until the reverses came, when she felt that loving

[23] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. i., No. lxxxix., Warsaw, January 23, 1807.

words were necessary to him, crushed as he was under so many reverses and such terrible disappointments.[24]

She also visited him in the island of Elba, bringing consolation to the exile who had fallen from his grandeur and was left without glory and without fortune.[25] The figure of this constant and disinterested woman floats like an angel over the cowardice and treachery that accumulated as soon as Napoleon's star began to sink.

[24] Her son, too, was one of the advisers of the Third Napoleon.

[25] Lucien Bonaparte, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 201 ; Journal of Colonel Sir Neil Campbell, English Commissioner.

XV.

The Divorce—Political Motives—Pressure put upon Napoleon from 1800—Reason for his Decision.

The dismissal of the best of wives, with the only object of satisfying the vain pride of alliance with royal blood; the cruel abandonment of the wife after her divorce; the elegiac picture of an Empress weeping and alone at the gates of Paris, forced to look upon her who had taken her place — such are the themes worked out in a minor key by Napoleon's adversaries, in order to transform his divorce into an act of personal interest and gratuitous persecution.

It has been necessary to make a martyr of Joséphine in order to show up Napoleon as a pitiless egoist.

The study of documents has brought us to a conclusion less poetical, perhaps, but more in conformity with truth.

The divorce between Napoleon and Joséphine was pronounced on December 15, 1809.

The first idea of a separation from her

presented itself to the mind of Bonaparte on his return from Egypt in 1799, when he first realized her misconduct. This incident has been already narrated in its place.

Although Napoleon may have forgiven, he never forgot. As early as the year 1800, says Miot de Melito,[1] 'the plan of a new constitution on hereditary bases was being prepared. His divorce from Joséphine, and his marriage to one of several princesses, was talked of.'

At the same time the wife of the First Consul said to Thibaudeau: 'The most dangerous men for Bonaparte are those who try to inoculate him with ideas of heredity and dynasty, with a divorce and marriage with a princess.' Joséphine's interlocutor adds: 'She was alluding to the journey of Lucien, who, it was said, was going to Spain to negotiate a marriage.'[2]

Finally, Lucien Bonaparte, in his memoirs, records at full length the overtures that he made, and the acquiescence with which two proposals were received at the Court of Spain for an eventual marriage between Napoleon and the Infanta Isabella.[3]

From all sides Napoleon received entreaties of

[1] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 297.

[2] Thibaudeau, 'Consulat,' t. i., p. 28.

[3] Lucien, 'Mémoires,' t ii., pp. 66, 67; Madame de Rémusat, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 133.

the same kind. His brother Joseph, 'wishing to decide him to adopt the principle of heredity, pressed him to repudiate his wife and to marry again; and in support of his argument, brought forward all that had been said before upon the subject.'[4]

This conversation took place in 1804. Joséphine sought on all sides for support in her precarious position; she did her utmost to bring the interests of others into line with her own. According to Roederer, she said to Joseph:

'If he establish heredity, he will divorce me in order to have children; those children will keep you from power.'[5]

In his struggle against his surroundings, in 1804, it was from Napoleon that came the human cry, the cry of the heart, in these words:

'It is from a feeling of justice that I will not divorce my wife. My interests, perhaps the interests of the system, demand that I should marry again. But I have said to myself: "Why should I put away that good woman, simply because I have become greater?" No, it is beyond me. I have the heart of a man; I am not the offspring of a tigress. I will not make her unhappy.'[6]

It took no less than five years to accustom

[4] Miot de Melito, 'Mémoires,' t. ii.

[5] Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 515. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 512.

Napoleon to the idea that he should sacrifice his personal feelings to public interest. In answer to the repeated solicitations made to him on the point, he said: 'Cæsar and Frederick had no children.'[7] Nothing availed; the partisans of divorce continued their work, and in 1807 Prince Metternich reported to the Court of Austria as follows:

'The question of the marriage seems, unfortunately, to gain more consistency every day. The reports of it are so general, the Empress herself speaks so openly about her divorce, that it is difficult not to believe that it has some foundation.'[8]

In 1808 Fouché tried to force matters to a crisis. He tells us himself: 'Driven by an excess of zeal, I resolved to open fire, and to make Joséphine talk of the great sacrifice demanded of her by the solidity of the Empire and the happiness of the Emperor.'[9]

Joséphine's sterility had long been proved. Bourrienne says: 'I myself was aware of the efforts made by medical science to restore to Joséphine symptoms of fecundity, which had ceased to show themselves.'[10]

[7] Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 516.
[8] Prince Metternich, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 143.
[9] Fouché, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 380.
[10] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. v., p. 50.

The Emperor, on his side, was not sure how far he was responsible for the unfruitfulness of his first marriage, and this uncertainty redoubled his hesitation in repudiating a woman to whom he was attached, if not by love, by force of habit and incontestable friendship.

We have seen from his letters in 1806 that Joséphine was very anxious, and seemed to dread for herself the long stay of her husband in Poland. Her presentiment was realized three years later. In 1809, after the battle of Wagram, which marked the apogee of the Imperial power, Napoleon spent three months at Schönbrunn. There he was rejoined by Madame Walewska, who soon became enceinte.[11] From thenceforward Napoleon's resolution as to his duty to strengthen the institutions ruling in France seems to have been definitely fixed. Capable of having children, he thought that his destiny called upon him to assure the future of his country. And although the sacrifice, as will be seen, was no less painful to him than to Joséphine, the divorce was decided from that moment.

[11] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 215.

XVI.

Care taken in announcing the Divorce to Joséphine—Her Formal Acquiescence—Hysterics—Napoleon's Grief.

At first, Napoleon wished Count Lavalette, husband of Joséphine's niece, to undertake to announce the sad news to the Empress.

'I am not too old,' said the Emperor, 'to hope to have children, and I cannot hope for any by her; the peace of France requires that I should select another companion. You are the husband of her niece; she honours you with her affection. Will you prepare her for her new destiny?'[1]

Lavalette declined the mission, and it was at Fontainebleau, whither he had returned on October 26, 1809, that the Emperor gradually brought Joséphine to understand the imperious necessities which he was obeying, and that he obtained her consent to their separation.

'He tried by the kindest means,' says Constant,[2] 'and with the greatest tenderness, to bring the

[1] Count Lavalette, 'Mémoires et Souvenirs,' t. ii., p. 45.

[2] 'Mémoires,' t. iv., p. 168.

Empress to consent to this painful sacrifice. He did not have recourse, as has been declared, to anger or threats ; he appealed to his wife's reason, and she consented of her own free will.'

There is absolutely no doubt that the Empress understood, in their fullest extent, the reasons that required her to retreat. Indeed, supposing that she had not been willing to be divorced, who could have compelled her without having recourse to legal proceedings, of which no trace exists? But, further, if it be admitted that the Empress was violently forced, must it not also be admitted that, once conquered, she would have wished to go as far as possible from the man who had brutally put her away? Would she not have hastened to flee for ever from the scenes that had witnessed her humiliation?

Supposing that her gentle nature made her wish to avoid all scandal? Had she not in a foreign country a residence that seemed naturally pointed out to her at Milan, near her son Eugène, whom she adored? Nothing kept her in Paris; Eugène was in Italy, Hortense in Holland.

It may be affirmed that the scene between Napoleon and his wife was extremely painful, but it terminated amicably, on the basis of a sumptuous establishment for the Empress, and the preservation of Napoleon's affectionate regard. On these conditions she accepted the sacrifice,

and restored his liberty to the Emperor. And who can deny that she consented of her own free will, with the object of procuring an heir to the throne, when we see her, Joséphine, occupied later on in an attempt to remarry Napoleon?

Scarcely a month after the divorce, Joséphine, seconded by her daughter, Queen Hortense, made overtures to Madame de Metternich, with the view of bringing about a marriage between Napoleon and the Archduchess of Austria, and the negotiations were carried on through the ex-Empress. The proof of what we state is official and irrefutable; it is contained in the instructions sent from Vienna by Prince Metternich to the Austrian Ambassador in Paris.

'The most distinct overtures having been made by the Empress Joséphine and the Queen of Holland to Madame de Metternich, his Imperial Majesty (the Emperor of Austria) thinks it better to pursue this unofficial but less compromising road, in order to bring his real unvarnished sentiments before the eyes of the Emperor Napoleon.'[3]

It will surely be conceded that nobody could force a woman to take steps of this nature. If Joséphine, who ought to have been the last person to help on these combinations, gave her

[3] Prince Metternich, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 319, letter to Schwarzenberg, Vienna, January 27, 1810.

personal assistance to them, it was because she had understood that 'Napoleon had divorced her in order to effect immediately a fresh union from which he might hope for an heir,' as Caulaincourt says,[4] who was himself occupied at that time with trying to marry Napoleon to a Russian Princess.

When the Court returned to Paris, on November 14, the great event was the one topic of conversation.

'The Emperor's divorce,' says Girardin,[5] 'has been regarded as certain for several days; it was decided at Schönbrunn. Everyone is talking about it. The Empress herself has mentioned it to the woman who supplies her with flowers, to her doctors, and to several others.'

The nation was indifferent. 'France,' says Mollien,[6] 'saw nothing in the divorce but a palace arrangement.'

It is certain that, when Joséphine learned the exact date fixed for the consummation of the solemn act, she gave way to extreme grief, which betrayed itself in a violent fit of hysterics. Although for nearly eleven years she had been familiar with the idea of repudiation, a painful scene, handed down to us by an eye-witness,

[4] 'Souvenirs du Duc de Vicence,' part ii., t. ii., p. 210.

[5] 'Journal et Souvenirs,' t. ii., p. 343. See, too, Marshal Macdonald's 'Recollections.'

[6] 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 40.

occurred on November 30, when Napoleon announced to her that the deeds would be signed on December 15.

'It was after dinner,' says Monsieur de Bausset;[7] 'coffee had been brought in, and Napoleon took his cup off the tray presented to him by the page on duty, at the same time making a sign that he wished to be alone. Suddenly I heard loud cries proceeding from the Emperor's drawing-room, and emitted by the Empress Joséphine. The usher, thinking that she was ill, was about to open the door, but I prevented him, saying that the Emperor would call for help if he thought right. I was standing near the door, when Napoleon opened it, and, perceiving me, said hastily: 'Come in, Bausset, and shut the door.' I entered the drawing-room, and saw the Empress lying on the floor, uttering piercing cries. 'I shall not survive it,' she kept repeating. Napoleon said to me: 'Are you strong enough to lift Joséphine and carry her to her apartments by the private staircase communicating with her room, so that she may have all the care and attention her state requires?' With Napoleon's help, I raised her in my arms, and he, taking a candlestick off the table, lighted me and opened the door of the drawing-room. When we reached the head of the staircase, I pointed out to him

[7] 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 8.

that it was too narrow for me to carry her down without running the risk of a fall. Napoleon called an attendant, gave him the candle, and himself took hold of Joséphine's legs to help me to descend more gently. When she felt the efforts I was making to save myself from falling, she said, in a low voice: 'You are holding me too tightly.' I then saw that I need be under no uneasiness as to her health, and that she had not lost consciousness for a moment. The Emperor's agitation and anxiety were extreme. In his trouble, he told me the cause of all that had occurred. His words came out with difficulty and without sequence; his voice was choked and his eyes full of tears. He must have been beside himself to give so many details to me, who was so far from his councils and his confidence. The whole scene did not last more than seven or eight minutes. Napoleon sent instantly to fetch Corvisart,[8] Queen Hortense, Cambacérès and Fouché, and before returning to his own room he went to assure himself of Joséphine's state, and found her more calm and resigned.'

Peace soon found its way to the mind of the Empress, and on December 12 she received at the Tuileries.[9]

Three days later, on the morning of the fatal

[8] His physician.—*Translator.*

[9] Girardin, 'Journal et Souvenirs,' t. ii., p. 354.

day, we find Joséphine, while her hair was being dressed, studying a paper containing 'the speech that she was to pronounce before the Emperor, and which she had been given to learn by heart.'[10]

On the evening of December 15, 1809, in presence of the whole Imperial Family, and of the great dignitaries of the crown, the Emperor and Empress signed the deed annulling their marriage. 'The Emperor,' says Mollien, 'was no less moved than she was, and his tears were genuine.'

Eugène de Beauharnais himself spoke in the Senate when the divorce was announced. We extract the following passage from his speech:

'It is necessary for the happiness of France that the founder of this fourth dynasty should grow old surrounded by his direct descendants, as a guarantee to us all. The tears that this resolution has drawn from the Emperor suffice for my mother's glory.'[11]

[10] Mdlle. Avrillon, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 158.
[11] 'Mémoires du Prince Eugène,' t. vi., p. 294.

XVII.

Napoleon's Affection for Joséphine after the Divorce—Interview at Trianon—Series of Letters up to 1813.

After the divorce, Napoleon displayed to Joséphine great tenderness, which he always continued to her. It is clear that this attitude of the Emperor arose simply from the natural warmth of his heart, for his interest, on the eve of a new marriage, commanded him to appear entirely detached from any relations with his first wife. Nothing shows that he was happy after he had broken the tie. Everything, on the contrary, denotes in him the profoundest pity for the woman he had quitted.

'On the very evening of the divorce,' says Mollien,[1] 'as if he could not endure the solitude of the Tuileries, he started almost alone for Trianon. He spent three days there, seeing nobody, not even his ministers, and during his whole reign these three days were perhaps the only ones in which sentiment got the better of

[1] 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 40.

business. Everything was suspended—correspondence, audiences, councils even. He merely made some provisions for the comfort of her whom he had left, but only communicated them to me through one of his officers.'

'The very evening of his arrival at Trianon,' says Meneval,[2] 'the Emperor wrote a letter to the Empress to console her in her solitude at Malmaison.'

Between December 15 and 19, that is to say, two or three days after their separation, Napoleon went to see Joséphine at Malmaison. As soon as he reached Trianon, the Emperor wrote:

'I found you weaker than you ought to be. You have shown that you possess courage, find some now to support you; you must not give way to fatal melancholy; you must make yourself happy, and, above all, take care of your health, which is so precious to me. If you are attached to and love me, you must bear yourself bravely and be happy. You cannot doubt my constant and affectionate friendship, and you little know my feelings towards you, if you think that I can be happy if you are not, or contented if you are ill at ease. Good-bye, my friend; sleep well; remember that I wish it.'[3]

[2] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 232.

[3] 'Letters of Napoleon to Joséphine,' t. ii., No. cxc., to the Empress at Malmaison (no date).

During his retreat at Trianon, which lasted ten days, the Emperor sent five letters, all written in the same friendly tone, with the same assurances of affection.

On December 25, Joséphine, by invitation of the Emperor, went with Hortense to dine at Trianon. 'During dinner,' says Mdlle. Avrillon, 'the Empress seemed happy and quite at ease, and anyone would have thought that their Majesties had never parted.'[4] Seeing them thus happy at Trianon, would not one take them to be two lovers who have fled from prying eyes, rather than a married couple the day after a definitive rupture?

It is not to be supposed that Napoleon merely proposed to soften the position of his wife by kindness during the first days of her sorrow. He continued to watch over the woman whom he had thought it right to quit for the sake of his people.

By virtue of a decree of the Senate, Joséphine preserved the title of Empress-Queen, with a crown, and enjoyed an annual allowance of 2,000,000 francs (£80,000), which was declared obligatory upon the successors of the Emperor.[5] This allowance was afterwards increased to 3,000,000 francs (£120,000). 'He took care,'

[4] Mdlle. Avrillon, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 176.

[5] 'Mémoires de Prince Eugène,' t. vi., p. 295.

says the Empress's waiting-woman,[6] 'that she should want for nothing, and that she had not only what was useful, but also what was pleasant.'

On his return to Paris, Napoleon wrote to Joséphine: 'I was very sorry to see the Tuileries again; the great palace seemed to me empty, and I am so lonely in it.'[7]

A few days later he writes: 'I was very glad to see you yesterday. I feel what charms your society has for me. I have been at work all day with Estève. I have granted 100,000 francs (£4,000) for your immediate expenses at Malmaison, so you can plant anything you please. You will distribute this sum to suit yourself. I have ordered Estève to send you 200,000 francs (£8,000) as soon as the deed for Julien's house is signed. I have given orders that your set of rubies should be paid for, but I will have it valued, as I will not be robbed by jewellers. So there are 300,000 francs (£12,000) for you.

'I arranged that the million owed to you by the civil list for 1810 should be placed at the disposal of your man of business to pay your debts. You will find between 500,000 and 600,000 francs (£25,000 to £30,000) in the strong-box at Malmaison; you may have that for your plate and linen. I have ordered you a very beautiful porce-

[6] Mdlle. Avrillon, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 176.

[7] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. ii., No. cxcv.

lain dinner-service. They will take your orders about it, so that it may be very beautiful.'[8]

To the courtiers, who were doubtful as to whether they should go to Malmaison or not, Napoleon made it known that he would be glad that they should visit Joséphine.[9]

At all periods, even after his marriage with Maria-Louisa, we find marks of unchanging affection in his letters to Joséphine. We will take a few examples at random :

'This place (Malmaison) is full of feelings which never can and never ought to change—at least, on my side. I much want to see you, but I must be sure that you are strong and not weak. I am somewhat weak myself, and it distresses me much that I should be so.'[10]

'I shall have pleasure in seeing you at the Élysée, and shall be very glad to see you oftener, for you know how I love you.'[11]

All the letters are alike in the affectionate uniformity of their expressions. A month after the arrival of Maria-Louisa in France, Napoleon reiterates to Joséphine how much he loves her. 'Never doubt my feelings towards you; they

[8] 'Letters of Napoleon to Joséphine,' t. ii., No. cc., Sunday, 8 in the evening.

[9] Mdlle. Avrillon, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 180.

[10] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. ii., No. cciv., January 17, 1810.

[11] *Ibid.*, t. ii., No. ccvi., January 30, 1810.

will last as long as I shall; you would be unjust if you doubted this.'[12]

Joséphine took much interest in all that happened in the new Household; she even questioned Napoleon, who replied in September, 1810:

'The Empress is really enceinte; she is very well, and much attached to me.'[13] At the confinement of Maria-Louisa, Joséphine was not forgotten; the Emperor sent a page to her at Novare, whither she had gone for change of air. Her congratulations were very agreeable to the Emperor, who hastened to send her some details about the new baby:

'I have received your letter. I thank you. My son is a fine boy, and very healthy. I hope he will turn out well. He has my chest, my mouth, and my eyes. I hope he will fulfil his destiny.'[14]

This enthusiastic description is of the King of Rome, then two days old. Later on the child was taken several times to Joséphine, who asked to see him.

In 1812 the same protestations of constant friendship were renewed. In a moral sense, nothing had changed between Napoleon and Joséphine, not even the causes of their perpetual disagreements. In 1813 we have these paternal remonstrances from the Emperor:

[12] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. ii., No. ccxvii., April, 1810.

[13] *Ibid.*, t. ii., No. ccxix., September 14, 1810.

[14] *Ibid.*, t. ii., No. ccxxiv., March 22, 1811.

'Keep your affairs in order; only spend 1,500,000 francs (£60,000) a year, and put aside the same sum annually. In ten years you will have a reserve of 15,000,000 (£600,000) for your grandchildren. It is pleasant to be able to do something for, and to be of service to, them. Instead of that, I hear that you are in debt, and that is very wrong. Look after your money-matters, and do not give to everyone who wishes to take. If you wish to please me, let me hear that you have large savings. Think what a bad opinion I should have of you if I knew you were in debt with an income of 3,000,000 (£120,000).'[15]

This matter was always a cause of the greatest annoyance to Napoleon, who sent Mollien to remonstrate with Joséphine. On his return from Malmaison, the Minister informed the Emperor of Joséphine's wretchedness at having displeased him; Napoleon interrupted Mollien, exclaiming:

'You ought not to have made her cry!'[16]

The next sentence, which closes all that is known of the correspondence between Napoleon and Joséphine, sums up, far better than we could do it, the character of the Emperor, who never ceased to make use of the language of a good-natured *bourgeois*, when he wrote:

[15] Napoleon to Joséphine, t. ii., No. ccxxx., Trianon, August 25, 1813.

[16] Mollien, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 356.

'Tell me that you are well. I hear that you are getting as fat as the wife of a Normandy farmer.'[17]

[A few nights after Napoleon's return to the Tuileries in 1815 he sent for M. Horan, one of the physicians who had attended Joséphine during her last illness.

'So, Monsieur Horan,' said he, 'you did not leave the Empress during her malady?'

'No, Sire.'

'What was the cause of that malady?'

'Uneasiness of mind . . . grief.'

'You believe that?' (and Napoleon laid a strong emphasis on the word *believe*, looking steadfastly in the doctor's face). He then asked, 'Was she long ill? Did she suffer much?'

'She was ill a week, Sire; her Majesty suffered little bodily pain.'

'Did she see that she was dying? Did she show courage?'

'A sign her Majesty made when she could no longer express herself leaves me no doubt that she felt her end approaching; she seemed to contemplate it without fear.'

'Well! . . . well!' and then Napoleon, much affected, drew close to M. Horan, and added, 'You say that she was in grief; from what did that arise?'

[17] 'Letters of Napoleon to Joséphine,' t. ii., No. ccxxvii., to the Empress Joséphine at Malmaison.

'From passing events, Sire; from your Majesty's position last year.'

'Ah! she used to speak of me then?'

'Very often.'

Here Napoleon drew his hand across his eyes, which seemed filled with tears. He then went on: 'Good woman!—Excellent Joséphine! She loved me truly—she—did she not? . . . Ah! She was a Frenchwoman!'

'Yes, Sire, she loved you, and she would have proved it had it not been for dread of displeasing you: she had conceived an idea. . . .'

'How? . . . What would she have done?'

'She one day said that as Empress of the French she would drive through Paris with eight horses to her coach, and all her household in gala livery, to go and rejoin you at Fontainebleau, and never quit you more.'

'She would have done it—she was capable of doing it!'

Napoleon again betrayed deep emotion, on recovering from which he asked the physician the most minute questions about the nature of Joséphine's disease, the friends and attendants who were around her at the hour of her death, and the conduct of her two children, Eugène and Hortense. — Bourrienne's 'Memoirs of Napoleon,' English edition, vol. iii., p. 235.]

XVIII.

The Second Marriage—Russia's Refusal—Views upon Austria —Maria-Louisa's Trousseau—Impatience of the Emperor.

As Napoleon's second marriage had for its only object the foundation of a dynasty, it was most important, at the outset, that this dynasty should be, as far as possible, the equal of those then reigning in Europe. With this purpose in view, the Council of Ministers was consulted as to the choice that should be made between the princesses of Russia, Austria and Saxony. The majority of the council were in favour of beginning with Russia.[1]

In accordance with this decision, the Emperor wrote to Caulaincourt, then Ambassador at St. Petersburg:

'Austria and Russia, by their importance, are the only Powers with whom France can enter into an alliance, both on account of the position she occupies and of her political interests. I prefer an alliance with Russia. In these negotia-

[1] Mollien, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 121.

tions, Caulaincourt, you must employ all the prudence and skill of which you are capable. Reflect carefully. Do not hazard a word or a sign without weighing it. I must not be offered, still less refused. Hold my dignity high; it is that of France.'[2]

The Court of Russia, while recognizing the great honour, postponed its consent. The truth is that, while the Czar consented to this marriage for his sister, the Empress-mother hesitated to give her daughter to the Emperor of the French.[3] These tergiversations were clearly defined by Napoleon in a letter written to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in which he says:

'They have four times over asked for ten days to consider their decision. As to religion, it is not religion itself that alarms them, but the necessity of having a pope[4] at the Tuileries.'[5]

More humiliated, no doubt, than exhausted by the small encouragement he received, Napoleon cast his eyes upon the Court of Austria, and, like a practical man, knowing that the way to have a

[2] Duke of Vicenza, 'Souvenirs,' part ii., t. ii., p. 203.

[3] For the account given by the Czar of these negotiations, see 'Recollections of Marshal Macdonald,' English edition, vol. ii., pp. 205, 206.—*Translator.*

[4] Russian priest.—*Translator.*

[5] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xx., p. 270, No. 16,341, to Mons. de Champagny, Duc de Cadore, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, March 16, 1809.

thing well done is to do it one's self, he opened negotiations by an amusing episode, of which Metternich gives the following account:[6]

'At a masked ball given by the Arch Chancellor, Cambacérès, and which my wife had been earnestly requested to attend, a masked figure seized the arm of Madame de Metternich. She recognized Napoleon. The mask conducted her to a small room at the end of a long suite. After a little insignificant conversation, Napoleon asked her whether she thought that the Archduchess Maria-Louisa would accept his hand, and whether the Emperor, her father, would give his consent. My wife, much surprised, said that it was impossible for her to answer such a question.

'Napoleon then asked whether, if she were in the place of the Archduchess, she would give him her hand. Madame de Metternich answered that she would certainly refuse it.

'"You are spiteful," said the Emperor; "write to your husband and ask him what he thinks of it."'

The official overtures began immediately; we have seen already the part played by Joséphine in the negotiations. The Austrian Court knew, from diplomatic reports, of the offers made to Russia, and, fearing above all else the conse-

[6] Prince de Metternich, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 95.

quences of a Franco-Russian alliance, hesitated to withhold its consent. In the dread of being outrun by the Czar, it was resolved at Vienna to press on the marriage as quickly as possible.

When all the preliminaries were arranged, it was settled that Berthier should go to Vienna and marry the young Archduchess by proxy. He reached Vienna on March 4, 1810, bearing presents upon which the Emperor had spared nothing. Among other splendours, says Baron Peyrusse, were a necklace composed of thirty-two groups of stones, valued at 900,000 francs (£36,000), some earrings which had cost 400,000 francs (£16,000), and the portrait of Napoleon set in a circle of sixteen single diamonds, valued at 600,000 francs (£24,000).[7] Napoleon, we see, could be lavish on behalf of a betrothed whose dowry was, after all, a modest one, amounting only to 500,000 francs (£20,000).[8]

The marriage was celebrated at Vienna with the utmost magnificence, on March 11, 1810. On the 14th, Maria-Louisa, in charge of the Prince de Neuchâtel, quitted the Court of Austria accompanied by twelve ladies-in-waiting, who were to follow her as far as Braunau, where the Queen of Naples, Napoleon's sister, awaited her

[7] Baron de Peyrusse, 'Mémorial de 1809 à 1815,' Carcassonne, 1869, pp. 56, 57.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 59.

with all the Household of the new Empress. On March 16, at Braunau, the Austrian service to Maria-Louisa terminated, and the French began.[9]

When the marriage was once celebrated at Vienna, Napoleon experienced intense satisfaction, not unmixed with a keen feeling of pride, that he, of such ordinary birth, should be united to the daughter of one of the oldest sovereign houses in the world.

Napoleon's state of mind is perfectly described in the letters addressed to the King of Wurtemberg by his daughter, Queen Catherine, who was with the Emperor at the time :

'You will never believe, my dear father, how much in love he is with his future wife. He is excited beyond anything I could have imagined, and every day he sends her one of his chamberlains, charged, like Mercury, with the missives of great Jove. He showed me five of these epistles, which certainly were not written by St. Paul, but which really might have been dictated by an ardent lover. He talks of nothing but her, and what concerns her ; I will not enumerate for you all the pleasures and presents he is preparing for her, of which he has given me a detailed account. I will content myself with showing you the disposition of his mind by repeating that he

[9] 'Rélation Générale des Cérémonies relatives au Mariage,' Imperial Printing-press, May, 1810.

told me that, once married, he would give peace to the whole world, and all the rest of his time to Zaïre.'[10]

In another letter she says:

'To prove to you the extent to which the Emperor is occupied about his future wife, he has sent for tailor and bootmaker, in order that he may be as perfectly dressed as possible, and he is learning to valse. Neither you nor I should ever have suspected that!'

'Yet one more piece of gallantry on the part of the Emperor which I must tell you before I close this. He has had removed from the Diana Gallery all the pictures representing his victories over Austria; and he has given up for the present the idea of instituting the Order of the Three Fleeces, of which the two periods represented on the medal were emblematic of his two entries into Vienna, and he intends to alter the motto.'[11]

This information, corroborated in every particular by Baron Meneval, shows us Napoleon sending for Léger, the fashionable tailor, the tailor of the beautiful Murat, and somewhat clumsily practising the art of valsing.[12]

[10] 'Briefwechsel der Königin Katharina mit dem König Friedrich von Würtemberg,' t. i., p. 290.

[11] *Ibid.*, t. i., p. 292.

[12] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. iv., p. 197; Meneval, 'Souvenirs,' t. i., p. 253.

XIX.

Protocol regulating the Arrival of the New Empress—The Ceremonial violated—The Supper—Letter from Maria-Louisa—Her Happiness with Napoleon—Adalbert Neipperg.

As politics had given Napoleon a new wife, he undertook to make the conquest. With this object he invented all sorts of romantic ways of pleasing Maria-Louisa at their first meeting.

In the opinion of rigorous observers of Court etiquette, it was no light affair to regulate the first interview. All the technical works bearing on the subject were consulted, precedents were hunted up, the dusty archives sleeping peaceably in corners were routed out, and finally Prince Schwarzenberg discussed with Napoleon, line by line, all these questions of form. Eventually the following solemn dispositions were made :

'Tents were raised between Compiègne and Soissons, two leagues from the latter town, for the interview between their Majesties. These tents were placed beside the road, with two flights of steps to each, whether from Compiègne or from Soissons.

'A large space was kept round the tents, in which there was room for all the carriages belonging to the processions of their Majesties. A detachment of the Imperial Guard and of picked gendarmerie were to take up position there.

'The Emperor, on receiving notice of the Empress's approach, was to leave Compiègne with five carriages, and accompanied by the Princes and Princesses of his family and by the Grand Officers of State and of his Staff who were to travel with him. Those who had not seats provided for them in carriages were to ride.

'His Majesty was to be preceded and followed by a detachment of his Guard.

'The Emperor, on reaching the place intended for the interview, was to leave his carriage, and pass through the first tent on the Compiègne side, in which all the persons of his suite were to remain.

'The Empress was to pass through the first tent on the Soissons side, leaving there all her suite.

'It was also arranged that the Emperor and Empress were to meet in the middle tent, where would be placed a cushion, before which the Empress should stop, that she should courtesy, and that the Emperor, raising her, should embrace her.

'That a few minutes later their Majesties should enter a carriage holding six persons, with the Princesses; that the Grand Officers of State

and the Officers of the Staff should accompany the carriage on horseback.

'Finally, that the two processions should unite, so as to make but one with that of their Majesties at Compiègne.'[1]

It is probable that while the Emperor was elaborating with the Austrian Ambassador all the scenery for this first embrace, he fully meant to carry it out religiously. While alone with the diplomat, he was the Sovereign standing out for Court etiquette, but neither his fellow-worker nor he himself allowed for the human-being who, in Napoleon, always took the lead in questions of sentiment.

As soon as the Emperor knew that the Empress had left Vitry for Soissons, indifferent to his dignity and to formality, 'he jumped into a carriage with the King of Naples, and started off incognito, and without his suite. He had already travelled fifteen leagues, when, at Courcelles, he met the Empress's procession. He approached her carriage without being recognized, but the equerry, not aware of his intentions, opened the door, let down the steps, and cried, 'The Emperor!'[2]

Napoleon fell on Maria-Louisa's neck, who was quite unprepared for this somewhat rough

[1] 'Rélation Générale des Cérémonies,' etc., pp. 47, 48.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 49.

and gallant greeting, and then immediately ordered them to drive at full speed to Compiègne, which was reached at ten o'clock at night.[3]

They passed at full gallop in front of the tents solemnly erected, and under the very eyes of the arrangers of Court etiquette, who, parchments in hand, saw with amazement these violators of royal proprieties rush past them.

It will, of course, be imagined that the delicate point of the relations between the Emperor and Empress from March 28, date of the arrival at Compiègne, to April 1, date of the consecration of the civil marriage, had been carefully thought out. It was expressly stipulated that the Emperor should sleep at the Hôtel de la Chancellerie, and not at the palace, during the stay at Compiègne.

On March 28, at 10 o'clock at night, the procession drove up to the palace.

Supper was prepared for their Majesties and all the Court in the Gallery of Francis I. Under the patronage of that gallant monarch, Napoleon addressed to his bride words which were emphasised by imploring looks. Maria-Louisa blushed, and was dumb with astonishment. To overcome the scruples of her who was only his wife by

[3] Bausset, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 44; Constant, 'Mémoires, t. iv., p. 204.

proxy, Napoleon called in the authority of Cardinal Fesch, to whom he said in presence of the Empress:

'Is it not true that we are really married?'

'Yes, Sire, according to the Civil Law,' replied the Cardinal, little dreaming of the use to which his answer would be put.[4]

The breakfast which Napoleon caused to be served next morning in the room of Maria-Louisa by her waiting-women dispenses us from explaining how the latter part of the protocol was eluded, and why the apartments in the Hôtel de la Chancellerie did not shelter their august tenant.[5]

His valet says:

'After his conversation with the Empress, Napoleon retired to his room, scented himself with eau-de-Cologne, and, clothed only in a dressing-gown, returned secretly to the Empress.' To complete his story, Constant adds:

'Next morning, while dressing, the Emperor asked me whether anyone had noticed the way he had broken through the programme.'[6]

By his enthusiasm, the most powerful monarch in Europe shows us that his temperament has not changed since 1796. The impatience of the

[4] Baron Peyrusse, 'Mémorial,' p. 62.

[5] *Ibid.*; Bausset, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 44; Meneval, t. i., p. 256.

[6] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. iv., p. 206.

Emperor for the arrival of Maria-Louisa is the same as that of General Bonaparte for Joséphine.

Once this exuberance has gone out, is the Sovereign going to fall back into the reserved relations which are the general rule of royal marriages? Not at all. He has but one idea in his mind regarding his wife, and that is to be a good husband, and to found a happy and peaceful home. He found in Maria-Louisa a much more malleable, more docile nature than in Joséphine; and in spite of all that has been said to palliate the inexcusable treachery of the second Empress when the final disaster came, we can affirm, and will prove, that Maria-Louisa was very happy during her union with Napoleon.

Our first witness cannot be impugned. It is Maria-Louisa herself, and her evidence is taken from the letters she wrote to her two most intimate friends, the Comtesses de Colloredo and de Crenneville.

Scarcely a month after her arrival at Compiègne, she writes:

'Heaven has heard your prayers on my behalf when I married. May you soon experience happiness similar to mine!'[7]

From the dates and extracts from her letters, it will be seen that the opinion of the Empress

[7] 'Correspondence of Maria-Louisa,' p. 146, Compiègne, April 24, 1811.

never varied so long as she was with the Emperor.

'Middleburg,
'*May* 10, 1810.

'I think it most natural that you should feel leaving the best of mothers. I also have experienced it; but believe me that the affection one bears to one's husband softens, I would almost say cures, this grief. I asked the Emperor's permission to sign your marriage contract; he agreed at once with that grace and kindness that are natural to him.'[8]

'*January* 1, 1811.

'I can form no better wish for you than that you should have happiness equal to mine. You can imagine that we do not want for amusements in a town so large as Paris, but the moments that are most pleasant to me are those I pass with the Emperor.'[9]

'*May* 6, 1811.

'I hope that my son (the King of Rome) will make, some day, as his father does, the happiness of all who know and approach him.'[10]

'Prague,
'*June* 28, 1812.

'. . . . But the absence of the Emperor is sufficient to disturb all this pleasure; I shall be

[8] 'Correspondence of Maria-Louisa,' p. 147.

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 146, 147.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 150.

contented and tranquil only when I see him. May God preserve you always from such a separation! it is too hard upon a loving heart, and if it lasts long I shall not be able to bear it.'[11]

'Saint-Cloud,
'*October* 1, 1812.

'. . . . From this you can judge of the grief that the Emperor's absence causes me, and which will only cease when he returns. I worry and disturb myself unceasingly. One day passed without a letter is enough to drive me to despair, and when I receive one, it only comforts me for a few hours.'[12]

'Saint-Cloud,
'*October* 2, 1812.

'Thank you warmly for the prayers you put up for me on the occasion of my saint's day. There is one, above all, that I hope to see accomplished soon, and that is for the return of the Emperor. My son cannot succeed in making me forget, were it but for a few minutes, the absence of his father.'[13]

'Paris,
'*November* 12, 1812.

'Little did you think, when you told me of your prayers, that they would be so soon heard, and that I should have the happiness of finding

[11] 'Correspondence of Maria-Louisa,' p. 158.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 159. [13] *Ibid.*, pp. 162, 163.

myself back in Paris with the Emperor before the end of the year. I am sure that you will share the happiness I have felt in seeing him again after a separation of more than seven months.'[14]

'Saint-Cloud,
'*July* 22, 1813.

'I would have written to you with my own hand were I not on the point of starting for Mayence, where I am to meet the Emperor. I say nothing to you about my joy; you will easily imagine it.'[15]

Do not these letters, written in all the simplicity of a friendship dating from childhood, prove in the most positive manner that Maria-Louisa was happy with Napoleon?

It will not be beside the question to notice here how Maria-Louisa confirmed all she had said about the Emperor's kindness when she heard of his death. At that time she had no sort of restraint to observe; on the contrary, it was to her interest to display hostile sentiments, which alone could extenuate her bad conduct. She was living at that time with Adam Adalbert, Count von Neipperg, a modest Austrian General, who had been her lover since 1814, and whose only distinction consisted in a black bandage worn to

[14] 'Correspondence of Maria-Louisa,' p. 164.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 168.

cover the hollow place caused by the loss of the left eye.[16] By this General she had had a son long before the death of the Emperor.

As soon as the great news began to be circulated in Europe, Maria-Louisa wrote: 'The Emperor Napoleon, far from ill-treating me, as people believe, always behaved to me with the utmost attention.'[17]

We do not think anything of the restrictions contained in the same letter, such as: 'I had never any deep feelings for Napoleon.' Whence comes the denial that she gives to her whole correspondence, if not from the care that she has to take in 1821 not to offend Neipperg, who was probably jealous of his Imperial predecessor? Neipperg in turn gave place to the Comte de Bombelles.

[16] Portrait of the Count von Neipperg, A. A. Collection.

[17] 'Correspondence of Maria-Louisa,' p. 226, Gala, July 19, 1821.

XX.

Constant Attentions of Napoleon to his Young Wife—Delight at having an Economical Wife—His Delicacy.

We wish to leave no doubt as to the proofs of affection that Napoleon showered on his second wife ; friends and enemies alike, in their letters, bear witness to it :

'At Court and in society,' says Fouché,[1] 'the instructions were to please the young Empress, who, without any return, had captivated Napoleon ; he was quite infatuated about her.'

'The Empress Maria-Louisa, his young and insignificant wife, was the object of his tenderest care. Napoleon followed her everywhere with loving looks. She saw that he was proud to show her everywhere to everybody.'[2]

Madame Durand, wife of the General of that name, and principal lady-in-waiting to the Empress Maria-Louisa, says :

'During the first three months following his

[1] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 416.

[2] Duke of Vicenza, 'Souvenirs,' t. i., p. 4.

marriage, the Emperor was day and night with the Empress. The most urgent business could hardly drag him away from her for a few moments.'[3]

'The Emperor,' says Monsieur de Champagny, 'was the best husband in the world. It would be impossible for anyone to display more delicate and loving attention.'[4]

Napoleon, who was reported to be so haughty, so repellent, as a rule, hesitates at nothing in order to discover whether his wife is really happy. The assurances that she gives him are not enough; he wishes to know all her thoughts from a third person who is in her confidence. Here is an instance of 'childishness' given by Prince Metternich:[5]

'I found Napoleon with the Empress. Conversation turned upon commonplace topics, when Napoleon said to me:

'"I wish the Empress to speak openly to you, and tell you candidly what she thinks of her position. You are a friend, and she ought to have no secrets from you."

'As he concluded this remark, Napoleon locked the door of the drawing-room, put the key in his pocket, and disappeared through another door.

[3] 'Mémoires de la Générale Durand,' p. 28.
[4] De Champagny, 'Souvenirs,' p. 124.
[5] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 105.

I asked the Empress what this scene meant ; she replied by putting the same question to me. Seeing that she had not been prepared beforehand by the Emperor, I guessed that he wished to enable me to gather from the mouth of the Empress herself some ideas upon her domestic life, so that I might give a favourable report to the Emperor her father. We remained locked up together for nearly an hour, when Napoleon returned, laughing, into the room.

'"Well," said he, "have you had a good talk? Did the Empress say good or bad things about me? Did she laugh or cry? I do not ask you for a report ; these are secrets between you two, and do not concern any third person, even when that third person is the husband."

'Next day, Napoleon found an opportunity of speaking to me.

'"What did the Empress say to you yesterday?" he asked.

'"You told me," I answered, "that our conversation did not concern a third person. Permit me to keep it a secret."

'"The Empress told you," exclaimed Napoleon, "that she was happy with me, and that she had no complaints to make. I hope that you will repeat it to your Emperor, and that he will believe you rather than other people."'

Napoleon noticed with satisfaction that his

wife was economical, an important point which he had never succeeded in gaining from Joséphine.

Eighteen months after his divorce, in a letter to Mollien, he was delighted at being able to establish a comparison advantageous to his new wife :

'The Empress Louisa,' he writes, 'has a hundred thousand crowns (£12,000). She never spends this sum ; she settles all her accounts once a week, deprives herself of new gowns if necessary, and imposes privations upon herself in order to keep out of debt.'[6]

While he was delighted with the careful and orderly habits of Maria-Louisa, Napoleon refused her nothing that she desired, however costly it might be.

'Happening to learn that she wanted a set of Brazilian rubies, and that the state of her budget would not permit of her purchasing it, the Emperor, highly pleased with the wisdom of the Empress and with her methodical disposition, commanded that a second set should be prepared, similar to the first, but of the value of between 300,000 and 400,000 francs (£12,000—£16,000), and desired that nothing should be said about what he had heard, or of what he intended to do.'[7]

[6] Mollien, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 353.
[7] Meneval, 'Souvenirs,' t. i., pp. 295, 296.

Her joy at receiving these magnificent jewels may be imagined.

On another occasion her husband showed that his forethought was equal to his liberality:

'As New Year's Day drew near, the Emperor, wishing to give her money fòr her presents, asked whether she did not intend to send anything to her sisters. She answered that she had already thought about it, and that she had ordered jewels to the amount of about 25,000 francs (£1,000). As he thought that rather small, she answered that her sisters were not spoiled as she was, and that they would think their presents magnificent. The Emperor then told her that he had intended to give her 25,000 francs for her presents, but that he had thought it over and would give her double that amount (£2,000). Eventually the Empress received 100,000 francs (£4,000) from him.'[8]

Constant, therefore, had good grounds for saying:

'The Emperor was devotedly attached to his new wife. His attentions to her were unceasing, and all his conduct was that of a man deeply in love.'[9]

Neither then nor later did Napoleon seek to impose upon those near him the inflexible authority which, according to his usual biogra-

[8] Meneval, 'Souvenirs,' t. i., p. 296.

[9] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. iv., p. 207.

phers, was one of the salient features of his character. He knew that family life is made up of reciprocal concessions, and, in order to avoid discussion, would allow his orders to be disobeyed, even in presence of the household.

'During the autumn following his marriage,' says Madame Durand,[10] 'the Court went to spend some time at Fontainebleau. Fires were lighted everywhere, except in the Empress's room, and she, accustomed to stoves, said that fire was disagreeable to her. One day the Emperor came to sit with her; on leaving her room, he complained of the cold, and desired the lady-in-waiting to have a fire lighted. When the Emperor was gone, the Empress countermanded the fire. The lady-in-waiting was Mdlle. Rabusson, a young lady who had recently come from Écouen, very simple and outspoken. The Emperor came back two hours later, and asked why his orders had not been executed.

'Sire,' said the lady, 'the Empress will not have a fire. She is in her own rooms here, and I must obey her.'

The Emperor laughed heartily at this answer, and, on returning to his own room, said to Marshal Duroc, who happened to be there :

'Do you know what has just happened to me in the Empress's apartments? I was told that I

[10] 'Mémoires,' pp. 33, 34.

was not at home there, and that I could not have a fire.'

The answer provided the castle with amusement for several days.

One might be inclined to believe that these amiable traits of character were merely Court gossip, were they not borne out by other facts of analogous nature, which reveal the often timorous and not obstinate character of Napoleon at home. It was not without good grounds that Maria-Louisa said to the Austrian Ambassador :

'I am not afraid of Napoleon, but I begin to think that he is of me.'[11]

One is amazed to see the Emperor humiliating himself, as it were, by asking a stranger to repeat to Maria-Louisa some observations that had been made upon her behaviour. We will leave Prince Metternich to tell this curious story :

'During the summer of 1810, Napoleon retained me, after his levée, at Saint-Cloud. When we were alone, he told me, with some embarrassment of manner, that I could do him service.

'"It concerns the Empress," he said. "She is young, and does not yet understand the ways of this country, nor the character of the French. I have placed the Duchess of Montebello near her ; she is quite the right person, but she sometimes commits indiscretions. Yesterday, for

[11] 'Mémoires du Prince de Metternich,' t. i., p. 286.

instance, while walking in the park with the Empress, she presented to her one of her cousins. The Empress spoke to him, and was wrong in so doing; if she allows all sorts of young men to be presented to her, she will soon fall a prey to intriguers. Everyone in France has always a favour to ask. The Empress will be besieged, and, without being able to do any good, will be exposed to a great many annoyances."

'I told Napoleon that I shared his views, but that I failed to understand his motives for taking me into his confidence.

'"It is," he replied, "because I want you to speak to the Empress."

'I expressed surprise that he did not speak to her himself.

'"The advice is good and wise," I added, "and the Empress has much too much sense not to see it."

'"I prefer," he broke in, "that you should undertake the commission. The Empress is young; she might think me disagreeable. You are her father's Minister and the friend of her childhood, and what you say to her will make more impression upon her than anything that comes from me."'[12]

Here are some lines written by the hand of Napoleon himself, which also prove the distrust-

[12] 'Mémoires du Prince de Metternich,' t i., pp. 105, 106.

ful circumspection with which he surrounded the Empress. They are addressed to the Minister of Police:

'The *Gazette de France* of to-day contains an article full of ridiculous details about the Empress. Scold its author severely. He talks about a canary and a little dog, invented by German stupidity, but quite out of place in France. The editors of our newspapers are fools.'[13]

[13] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxi., p. 294, No. 17,171, to the Minister of Police, Paris, November 28, 1810.

XXI.

Confinement of Maria-Louisa—Napoleon sacrifices Politics to his Duty as a Husband—Birth of the King of Rome—Public Rejoicings—Fatherly Love.

It would be useless to attempt to describe Napoleon's immense joy when, three months after marriage, the Empress began to exhibit symptoms of delicate health; his happiness was complete when she was confined of a son.

What a wonderful dream! The scholar on the foundation of the military schools, the humble officer of artillery, was founding a dynasty summoned to govern the largest empire in Europe, and his heir was the grandson of a monarch who ruled by Divine right!

At the moment of the confinement, which was exceedingly painful, fortune seemed to dispute with Napoleon his unrivalled felicity.

When Dubois, the surgeon, came to announce that it would be impossible to save the child's life except at the cost of that of the mother, a cruel alternative was opened before the Emperor.

Had he been the man he is described, selfish, sacrificing everything to his personal interests, he would have demanded the life of the child. Was not the child the one reason of his marriage with Maria-Louisa?

Napoleon did not hesitate an instant, but exclaimed:

'Think only of the mother!'[1]

The heart of the husband spoke and silenced that of the sovereign. What signified the grand dreams of posterity, the half-seen joys of paternity? It was his wife, above all, whom he would keep, the simple and good wife given to him by policy, but whom his loyal and protecting love would preserve.

As the child appeared feet foremost, it was necessary to have recourse to the forceps to free his head. The Emperor could not endure for more than a few moments the anguish of this horrible operation, which lasted twenty minutes. He let go of the Empress's hand, which he had been holding, and retired into the dressing-room, as pale as the dead, and almost beside himself.[2]

Finally, at eight in the morning,[3] on March 20, 1811, the child was born, and as soon as

[1] Comte Lavalette, 'Mémoires et Souvenirs,' t. ii., p. 52; 'Mémoires de la Générale Durand,' p. 63.

[2] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. iv., p. 240.

[3] Bausset, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 66.

Napoleon was informed of the event he flew to his wife and seized her in his arms.

The child remained seven minutes without giving a sign of life; Napoleon glanced at him, thought him dead, and occupied himself solely with the Empress. At last the child emitted a cry, and then the Emperor went and kissed his son.[4]

The crowd assembled in the Tuileries gardens awaited with anxiety the delivery of the Empress. A salute of twenty-one guns was to announce a girl, a hundred a son.

At the twenty-second report, delirious joy spread among the people.

'Napoleon, standing behind a curtain at one of the windows of the Empress's room, enjoyed the spectacle of the general intoxication, and was profoundly moved by it. Large tears rolled down his cheeks, of which he seemed to be unconscious, and in that state he came to kiss his son a second time.'[5]

This was the last time that Napoleon was to know what were tears of joy, because fortune smiled upon him for the last time. From the birth of his son, the storm-clouds began to gather which were to carry the Emperor away beyond the seas, alone, without wife, without child, without power, without liberty!

[4] 'Mémoires de la Générale Durand,' p. 66.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 66.

The birth of the King of Rome gave rise to indescribable transports of enthusiasm. Public joy manifested itself spontaneously throughout Europe. Every poet, celebrated or unknown, sent in odes, stanzas, cantatas, songs. They came in all languages: French, German, Flemish, Italian, Greek, Latin, English!

From Casimir Delavigne, at Havre, student of the Lycée Napoléon and the Institution of Monsieur Ruinet, to Esménard, member of the French Academy, everyone vied in sending lines on the event.

Casimir Delavigne exclaims:

'Quel auguste appareil! Quels pompeux sacrifices!
Aux autels de son Dieu, dans les saints édifices,
La France est à genoux!
Quel immense concours assiège ces portiques!
Ministres du Seigneur, redoublez vos cantiques,
O temples! agrandissez-vous!'[6]

Esménard answers:

'Voici que dans les airs, sur la ville étonnée,
Deux aigles font voler le char de l'Hyménée.
La Victoire et l'Amour, s'y tenant par la main,
Veillent sur un berceau, l'espoir du genre humain.'[7]

From *Jérôme, bachoteur à la Grenouillère*, who sings merrily:

[6] 'Hommages Poétiques sur la Naissance du Roi de Rome,' Paris, 1811, t. i., p. 355.

[7] 'Hommages Poétiques,' etc., t. ii., p. 181.

'Y allons boire à la santé
Du Fanfan, l'espoir d' la France,
Et chantons à l'unisson
Vive Louise et Napoléon !'[8]

to the more idealist German, who, in his cantata entitled the 'River Nymphs,' introduces a discussion upon the great event between the Nymphs respectively of the Danube, the Seine, the Rhine, the Tiber, and the Po,[9] all Parnassus is let loose.

After the very natural emotion caused by this universal joy, Napoleon, at the summit of his ambition, remained exactly what he always had been in humour and character. In his home-life we shall see that he was just as simple and domestic as the most commonplace husband. To his adored child he will be just the same 'Uncle Bibiche' that the First Consul was to his nephews, the children of Hortense.

We take the following accounts from those given by eye-witnesses :

'Entrance to his study,' says Meneval,[10] 'was forbidden to everyone. He would not allow the nurse to come in, and used to beg Maria-Louisa to bring in her son herself; but the Empress was so little sure of her strength, when she took him from the arms of the nurse, that the Emperor,

[8] 'Hommages Poétiques,' etc., t. ii., p. 321.
[9] *Ibid.*, t. i., p. 406.
[10] 'Souvenirs,' p. 320 *et seq.*

who stood waiting for her at the door, used to hasten to meet her, take the child in his arms, and carry him off, covering him with kisses. If he were at his writing-table, about to sign a despatch, of which each word had to be weighed, his son, lying on his knees, or pressed against his chest, did not leave him. Sometimes he would drive away the important thoughts that occupied his mind, and, lying down on the ground, would play with this darling son like another child, careful to discover what would amuse him, and to avoid anything that teased him. His devotion to and patience with his boy were inexhaustible.'

'The Emperor loved his son passionately ; he took him in his arms every time he saw him, picked him up quickly from the ground, then put him down again, and picked him up again, laughing at the child's amusement. He teased him, carrying him in front of a looking-glass and making grimaces at him, at which the child laughed till he cried. At luncheon-time he would take him on his knee, and, dipping his finger in the sauce, smear his face with it.'[11]

When travelling or on a campaign, he was in constant communication with Madame de Montesquiou, who was in charge of the child. On September 30, 1811, he wrote to her from Antwerp :

[11] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. v., p. 36.

'I desire that the faculty, perhaps too careful, may not frustrate their own endeavours, and that care may be taken early to form the King's constitution by means of a simple diet. However, I trust that implicitly to you.'[12]

On his way to the campaign in Russia the Emperor writes :

'I hope you will soon inform me that he has cut his four last teeth. I have granted all that you asked for the wet-nurse ; you may assure her of this.'[13]

If we may judge from the various orders that bear the same date, the days on which Napoleon gave rein to his paternal instincts were not exactly days of leisure :

1. *Letter to the Minister of Public Worship, relative to the oath to be taken by ecclesiastics.*

2. *Order to the Minister of War to send two Italian battalions to Berlin.*

3. *To the same, order to forward a Neapolitan brigade to Nuremberg.*

4. *To the same, orders to forward to Bayonne the brigades now at Pontivy and Cherbourg, to send three brigades from France to Berlin, to cause two battalions now in Catalonia to start for Erfurt.*

5. *Order to the Minister of Marine to institute an inquiry into the conduct of a captain at Lorient.*

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[12] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxii., p. 494, No. 18,154.

[13] *Ibid.*, t. xxiii., p. 500, No. 18,802, Königsberg, June 16, 1812.

6. *To the Major-General, orders for the march of the King of Westphalia, General Régnier, and Prince Poniatowski, with notes on the position of the enemy.*

7. *To the same, orders for the Duke of Elchingen.*

8. *To the same, orders for convoying provisions to Marshals Oudinot, Lefèvre, and Bessières.*

9. *To the same, orders for the route to be taken by the Guard.*

10. *To the same, orders for the route to be followed by the Grand Army between the Vistula and the Niemen, with the minutest details respecting the service.*

11. *To Marshal Davoût, orders to prepare for a review which the Emperor will hold at Intersburg.*

12. *To General Durosnel, orders to purchase corn and oats.*[14]

Nothing, neither the large amount of work that he took upon himself, nor the cares of embarking upon a formidable war, nor the responsibilities of commanding an army of 300,000 men, could turn the Emperor's thoughts from the cradle of his child.

He received with great emotion, on the eve of the battle of the Moskowa, a portrait of the little King of Rome, sent to him by the Empress.[15] Napoleon, at the door of his tent, amid the acclamations of his soldiers, contemplated this picture with love; then, suddenly betraying the uneasiness that possessed him, he said to his secretary:

'Take it away; he must not see a battle-field so early.'[16]

[14] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxiii., pp. 500-506.

[15] Baron Fain, 'Manuscrit de 1812,' p. 118.

[16] General Gourgaud, 'Napoléon et la Grande Armée,' p. 212.

XXII.

Conduct of the Husband and Father in Days of Misfortune—Attempts of the Prisoner of the Island of Elba to correspond with his Wife—Shameful Conduct of Maria-Louisa—A Domestic Man.

Hitherto we have only been able to judge Napoleon at times when fortune has never ceased to smile upon him. The hour of his reverses has struck ; they are to be immense, of a nature to drive away entirely all cares of domestic life, and yet, in spite of the colossal effort he made to defend himself against the appalling catastrophes that were coming upon him, we shall see him preserve the same vigilant attentions, and the same tender care for his wife and child as in the days of his prosperity.

In 1813 he wrote to Cambacérès :

'The ministers are not to talk to the Empress upon any subject that could vex or alarm her.'[1]

[1] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxv., p. 232, No. 19,910, Erfurt, April 26, 1813.

After the battle of Dresden he wrote to Madame de Montesquiou :[2]

'I learn with pleasure that my son is growing and continuing to give good promise. I cannot help expressing to you my satisfaction at all the care you take of him.'[3]

During that terrible campaign he longed to see his wife, and made her join him at Mayence, whether he went on July 26.

'He talked to me,' says Caulaincourt, 'about this rendezvous given to Louisa with the enthusiasm of a young man. He put aside all cares, and his radiant countenance showed no trace of the melancholy emotions he had felt at the beginning of our interview.'[4]

At the very moment when, after a hope of peace, the Emperor found himself obliged to struggle against a coalition of the whole of Europe, he worries himself about small matters relative to his wife.

'I was annoyed at learning,' he writes to the Great Chamberlain, 'that the celebration of August 15 had been ill organized, and that so

[2] There must be some mistake here. The author says, 'Après la bataille de Dresde,' and the letter to Madame de Montesquiou is dated 'June 7, 1813.' The battle of Dresden, however, was not fought till August 27.—*Translator.*

[3] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxv., p. 368, No. 20,096, Hanau, June 7, 1813.

[4] Duke of Vicenza, 'Souvenirs,' t. i., p. 225.

bad were the arrangements made, that the Empress had been kept an endless time by some bad music . . . . indeed, I do not see what difficulty there would have been in allowing the Empress to leave a spectacle where she was stifled.'[5]

During the campaign in France, where, by a superhuman effort, giving free scope to a genius that has never been equalled, he defended foot by foot the territory of his country, and kept at bay with 30,000 men all the Powers of Europe, he wrote from Nogent:

'Keep up the Empress's spirits; she is dying of consumption.'[6]

Next day he made the recommendation which, in his opinion, overtopped everything else.

'Never,' he wrote, 'let the Empress and the King of Rome fall into the hands of the enemy,' and facing every eventuality that may come to pass, he cries:

'My own feeling is that I had rather see my son murdered than educated at Vienna as an Austrian prince, and I have a sufficiently good opinion of the Empress to be convinced that she

[5] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxvi., p. 113, No. 20,439, to Count Montesquiou, Löwenberg, August 23, 1813.

[6] *Ibid.*, t. xxvii., p. 128, No. 21,205, to King Joseph, Nogent, February 7, 1814.

would share my opinion, as far as a wife and mother could share it.'[7]

If anyone suggested to Napoleon, lost without hope of retrieving his position, the idea of asking his wife to intercede with the Emperor of Austria, he became furious, but less from pride than from a fear that such an attitude on the part of Maria-Louisa might damage his domestic peace.

'I am sorry to notice that you have mentioned the Bourbons to my wife. That would spoil her and make us quarrel; avoid saying anything that might lead her to believe that I would consent to be protected by her or her father. Besides, all that can only spoil her rest and her character.'[8]

Here, in his extreme distress, as in the grandest days of his success, Napoleon placed before everything else his personal dignity and his own home.

After exhausting the resources of a military knowledge so extensive as to strike his enemies with amazement, crushed by forces twenty times as large as his own, the Emperor, betrayed, abandoned by his comrades in arms, had to decide upon signing the act of abdication at Fontainebleau.

The thought of his wife and child, veiled for

[7] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxvii., p. 133, No. 21,211, to King Joseph, Nogent, February 8, 1814.

[8] *Ibid.*, t. xxvii., p. 307, No. 21,467, to King Joseph, Soissons, March 12, 1814.

one moment in his mind by the horrible tortures inflicted upon him by his friends and foes alike, came to his aid, and helped him to endure the utmost humiliations. He agreed to go to Elba, saying to his confidant:

'In the Island of Elba I may still be happy with my wife and my son.'[9]

After his farewell to the Guard, which has remained proverbial, he wrote to the Empress:

'I sleep to-night at Briare. I shall start again to-morrow morning, and only stop at Saint-Tropez. I hope your health will permit you to come and join me there.

'Farewell, my dear Louisa. You may always trust the courage, the calmness, and the love of your husband.'

At the Island of Elba, surprised, uneasy at his wife's silence, far from suspecting her of betraying him, he concluded she had been taken prisoner, and by every means in his power sought to establish communication with her. He addressed letter after letter which remained unanswered, and sent expresses.

'Colonel Laczinsky,' he writes on August 9, 'who starts to-day at two o'clock on his way to Leghorn, will go from there to Aix, whither he will carry a letter from me to the Empress. Write to Meneval and tell him that I expect the

[9] Duke of Vicenza, 'Souvenirs,' p. 120.

Empress at the end of August; that I desire her to bring my son, and that I am surprised at not receiving any news of her. Tell her that this arises from the fact that my letters are suppressed, that this absurd measure is probably taken by the order of some subaltern minister, and that it cannot be by her father's wish; tell her, further, that in any case no one has any rights over the Empress and her son.'[10]

Every means was set in motion by Napoleon to obtain news of his wife. On August 20 he writes to General Bertrand:

'Give the following instructions to the Captain of the Guard, who sails on the brig. He is to seize every opportunity of writing to Meneval and to Madame Brignole to give them news of me, to tell them that Madame Mère is here, and that I expect the Empress during the month of September. He can apply to the house of Brignole, and to any commercial houses in correspondence with them.'

In his feverish impatience for news, the Emperor adds:

'I desire that, during his stay at Genoa, he should write four times by different routes.'

His tortured mind can never rest: this mission

[10] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxvii., p. 408, No. 21,604, to General Bertrand, Grand Marshal of the Palace, Porto-Ferraio, August 9, 1814.



may fail, and his imagination is constantly at work with the object of making fresh combinations. When he fancies he has discovered another emissary with a chance of success, his cautions to him resemble those of a lover anxious to deceive all prying eyes.

'Give a month's leave to Captain Hureau, whose wife is about the Empress; he will embark on board the brig this evening. Send for him, and give him instructions to go to Aix, or anywhere else where the Empress may be. He must so arrange as not to be retained. He must get to Aix, either to his wife's or to Meneval's house, without its being known that he is there. He must make inquiries beforehand upon the amount of supervision exercised.'[11]

On the other hand, the few efforts made by Maria-Louisa to communicate with her husband during the first days of their separation were not very energetic. They did not go the length of contravening, to the smallest extent, the orders of her father, the Emperor of Austria. We must add, in order to make her indifference more comprehensible, that since July 17, 1814,[12] Count Neipperg's influence over her had been making itself felt.

[11] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxvii., No. 21,611, to General Bertrand, Porto-Ferraio, August 20, 1814.

[12] Meneval, t. ii., p. 165.



In October, Napoleon, not knowing to whom further he could address himself for news, wrote to the Grand-Duke of Tuscany, the Empress's uncle:

'I beg your Royal Highness to let me know whether you will permit me to address to you, once a week, a letter for the Empress, or whether you will send me in return news of her, and any letters from Madame de Montesquiou, my son's attendant. I flatter myself that, in spite of the events that have altered so many people, your Royal Highness still preserves some friendship for me. If you will give me a proof of it, it will be a very real consolation to me.'[13]

What a heart-breaking contrast! Here was a man who had known all the intoxications of glory and of omnipotence, who had for ten years been the object of the obsequious demonstrations of kings, and of the adulation of nations, and now he is reduced to beg the sympathy of a petty prince with the simple object of recovering his wife!

In December the Emperor, still unable to believe that he was abandoned, wrote to Bertrand:

'Find out how much Lafargue's house would cost, and what need be spent upon it to put it in

[13] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxvii., p. 432, No. 21,651, to Ferdinand-Joseph, Grand-Duke of Tuscany, October 10, 1814.

order. If the Empress and the King of Rome were to come here, it would be the only place suitable to lodge the princess.'[14]

During his melancholy sojourn in the Island of Elba, to the incessant pain of mind was added the misery of receiving no mark of affection from Maria-Louisa, no news of the son whom he adored.

The only proof of constancy that came to the relief of his desolate heart was shown by Madame Walewska. That noble and disinterested woman felt at a distance what the heart of her former lover was enduring, and brought to him, on September 1, the consolations of her love.[15] She stayed three days at Marciana, and then Napoleon once more fell into his dreary solitude.

When Napoleon quitted Elba, we may believe that, to his desire to regain possession of his throne, was closely allied an ardent desire to recover the affection of his wife and the caresses of his child. Immediately upon his arrival he wrote to the Emperor of Austria:

'I am too well acquainted with the principles of your Majesty, I know too well what value you attach to family ties, not to feel a happy conviction that you will hasten, whatever may

[14] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxvii., p. 439, No. 21,661, December 28, 1814.

[15] 'Journal of Colonel Sir Neil Campbell,' edition of A. Pichot, p. 157.

be the inclinations of your Cabinet and your policy, to help me in pressing forward the moment of meeting between a wife and her husband, and a child with his father.'[16]

The Emperor of Austria was not obliged to put any pressure on his daughter to encourage her in despising her duties as wife and mother. She was living tranquilly in a contemptible concubinage.

Attempts have been made to ascribe the outrageous conduct of Maria-Louisa to the weakness of her character. Weakness may inspire pity, but no indulgence should be accorded to cynicism.

Does one cry ever come from her heart when her husband is finally vanquished in the gigantic struggle which held out as a prize the Empire, his wife and his son? Does she ever show a spark of pity for the father of her child?

In an intimate letter, with which politics have nothing whatever to do, here are the terms in which she speaks of the progress of the allies against France:

'General Neipperg has given no sign of life for eighteen days past, so that I do not know the details of the last bulletin, but I am rejoiced, as is everyone else, at the good news it contains.'[17]

[16] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxviii., p. 61, No. 21,753, Paris, April 1, 1815.

[17] 'Correspondence of Maria-Louisa,' p. 179.

Thus, in presence of events in which the stake is the safety of the country of which she had been Sovereign, which are to decide the fate of her husband and the destinies of her son, Maria-Louisa, in a brazen manner, classes herself with 'everyone else!' Posterity, avenger of the simple laws of honour and fidelity, will also reckon, we trust, this wretched Princess among the unfortunate women who, to the shame of adultery, have added baseness of heart and despicability of character.

This study of Napoleon as a husband, commenced under the auspices of the magnificent triumphs of the campaign in Italy, closes in the terrors of the utter ruin of Waterloo. Henceforward, left to himself upon the rock of St. Helena, the Emperor bewails the absence of his son, and his vile abandonment by her whom he had loved so well.

Under all the aspects in which we have considered him, at the summit of his glory as in the abysses of defeat, Napoleon preserved the high conjugal sentiments that he bore in him from his youth.

He had two wives; he surrounded them both with equal affection. He applied himself by every means, by every attention in his power, to make them happy, and yet both deceived him, with this difference, that, while Joséphine was

unfaithful to him almost from the first, Maria-Louisa only deceived him after several years of marriage.

In both his conjugal misfortunes, according to the common rule, a thick veil covered his eyes. In presence of justifiable suspicions, he insisted upon doubting till the proof was complete. In the case of Joséphine, he long attributed to levity the appearance of infidelity; in that of Maria-Louisa, he preferred to believe her a prisoner and a victim rather than inconstant.

We have seen how, in each of these unions, he tried to found an exemplary and peaceful home, governed by the simplest habits.

We have seen how he, who resented the slightest attacks on the part of the most powerful monarchs, gave way at home in order to avoid the smallest domestic conflicts. He who commanded 40,000,000 of men had nothing but weakness to oppose to the caprices of the wife and children around him.

Neither the splendours of a marvellous career, nor the supreme pride of Imperial state, had any influence upon his character as husband and father. Napoleon never derogated from the strict principles inculcated by his early education.

BOOK III.

THE FAMILY

I.

Illusions—Napoleon's Brothers and Sisters—Their Excessive Claims—Opinions of Contemporaries of the Empire—Calumnious Insinuations — Memoirs of Madame de Rémusat.

'Inhuman towards his brothers, incestuous with his sisters'—such are the expressions in vogue among Napoleon's detractors to define his relations with his family.

The first of these charges is easily met ; documents and evidence abound ; and from them we can judge who was wrong in this family that was entirely disunited because each of its members chose to think himself slighted and ill-treated by the Emperor ; whereas each one had only to live in luxurious opulence.

The misfortunes of Napoleon's brothers and sisters have their origin in a belief common to them all, that they were kings by right Divine, and queens by birth. Their state of mind is perfectly summed up in an outburst of Napoleon, complaining to Bourrienne of the recriminations of his family :

'Upon my word, to listen to them, you would suppose I had devoured the whole of my father's inheritance.'[1]

These recriminations, moreover, did not last only for a day. They were constant, recurring with intolerable persistency, and putting to a most irritating proof a brotherly forbearance, which caused a contemporary to say:

'Napoleon found it more difficult to govern his family than his kingdom.'[2]

Indeed, it would have been difficult to satisfy them all. Lucien grumbled because he was nothing; Joseph complained because he was a king; Louis posed as a king and martyr, fallen from rights that he had voluntarily renounced; and Jerôme regarded himself as ill-used because his royal budget was too limited for his reckless expenditure. Eliza found her duchy too small for her haughty spirit; Caroline looked higher than her kingdom of Naples; Pauline suffered because she could not give free rein to her extravagance of every kind; and Madame Mère bewailed her hard lot inasmuch as she could not economise as much as she desired.

To this daily chorus of entreaties, reproaches, generally public, which diminished his authority,

[1] Bourrienne, 'Mémoires,' t. vi., p. 273. See, too, p. 23, vol. ii., for a similar story.

[2] Mdlle. Avrillon, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 330.

the Emperor, his head full of grave pre-occupations, only opposed a temporary resistance, soon overcome by his natural weakness.

Will it be said that his conduct was guided by reasons contrary to true affection for his family? Will it be alleged that his interests and his self-respect prevented him from displaying to the nation and other European courts the spectacle of regrettable family quarrels? No doubt he did consider public opinion, and by that very fact he gave another proof of his wish not to place himself above the level of humanity. He had this weakness, and did not conceal it. How sadly he wrote to Jerôme concerning the scandal caused by Louis in Holland:

'The family had need to give tokens of moderation and good conduct. All this will not give Europe a good opinion of us.'[3]

But this legitimate and, at any rate, respectable anxiety was not the mainspring of Napoleon's actions. It was the direct result of his earnest desire to see all his own people happy and respected—a desire which already animated him at the time when he was responsible to no one for his actions.

His solicitude for Joseph and for Lucien,

[3] F. Rocquain, 'Napoléon I. et le Roi Louis,' p. 290, Letter from Napoleon to King Jerôme, Rambouillet, July 13, 1810 (not published in the correspondence).

warmly expressed in the letters he wrote while still a schoolboy of thirteen at Brienne; his paternal care for Louis, whom, as a Lieutenant, he educated at the cost of untold privations, the help given to Eliza by the Captain in disgrace, the education of Jerôme undertaken by the General, the marriages of Pauline and Caroline made by the First Consul with no other thought than their happiness, are so many patent facts which bear witness that the Emperor, in showing himself kindly disposed to his family, needed no other motive than the natural instincts of his heart.[4]

Thus, while all of them, without exception, did their utmost to raise up continual difficulties around him, while his whole life was saddened by the demands of some and the errors of others, Napoleon, as we shall see, displayed towards them inexhaustible munificence and indulgence.

Having regard to general opinion, which has been led astray by many calumnies, travestying the simplest facts, the opinion here expressed may seem paradoxical. It is, however, supported by numerous contemporaries, several of whom were not in sympathy with Napoleon.

'Bonaparte's own family,' says Miot de Mélito,[5]

[4] This statement appears open to question, as, entirely from motives of policy, the Emperor attempted to divorce at least two of his brothers, and in Jerôme's case was successful.

[5] 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 243.

'was more divided than ever, nor could all the favours of fortune lavished upon it satisfy personal ambitions nor bring about concord and unity of views. From the very beginning unexpected resistance was met, claims were made, and hateful passions unchained in the hearts that Napoleon had hoped to attach to himself by splendid benefits, for which he had a right to expect gratitude.'

Prince Metternich, a man well informed by his position, and, moreover, an enemy of Napoleon, expresses himself in terms almost identical:

'Napoleon had a great weakness for his family. A good son, a good parent, with those shades of character that are particularly to be met with in middle-class Italian households, he suffered from the extravagances of some members of his family, without putting forth sufficient will to stop them, although it is clear that he should have done so in his own interest.'[6]

Speaking of the Imperial family, the Duke of Vicenza says:[7]

'The Emperor was worn out by the reckless prodigality of some, irritated by the ambitious pretensions of others, and by the quarrels and susceptibility on points of etiquette that all raised on certain occasions.'

[6] 'Mémoires,' t. i., pp. 286, 310.

[7] 'Souvenirs,' part ii., t. ii., p. 194.

Stendhal, in his usual laconic manner, says :

'It would have been much happier for Napoleon if he had had no family.'[8]

Stanislas Girardin is of the same opinion :[9]

'It was in his own family that Napoleon encountered the most strenuous opposition ; alone, he would have been more tranquil and France more happy.'

'All of them,' says General Rapp,[10] 'except his mother, overwhelmed him with disappointments, yet he never ceased showering kindnesses and honours upon them.'

'It is worthy of notice,' says Constant, 'that, despite the frequent annoyances caused him by his family, the Emperor always retained the greatest affection for them all.'[11]

This opinion was shared by Bourrienne :[12]

'How bitter it must have been to Napoleon to see his family so eager for riches ! The more he loaded them with favours, the more insatiable they seemed !'[13]

Finally, it was from the mouth of the Emperor himself that, during his reign, Prince Metternich and Roederer had the following significant words:

[8] 'Vie de Napoléon,' p. 24.

[9] 'Journal et Souvenirs,' t. ii., p. 325.

[10] 'Mémoires,' p. 12. [11] *Ibid.*, t. iii., p. 225

[12] *Ibid.*, t. vi., p. 273.

[13] Except Lucien and the Cardinal Archbishop of Lyons.

'My relations have done me much more harm than I have done them good. They possess kingdoms which some of them cannot manage, and wherein others compromise me by parodying me.'[14]

'I am much annoyed by my family. . . . I do not want my family unless they be French.'[15]

These last words were aimed at the curious direction that his brothers, kings by his will, desired to introduce into their policy.

After hearing all these witnesses, similar in their tendency, we may boldly declare that Napoleon was an excellent brother. This conclusion will be still more clear when we have shown Napoleon in his individual relations with each member of his family.

In later days people have relied upon the memoirs of Madame de Rémusat,[16] which we have vainly searched for anything more than an abominable accusation. We can find no single authentic argument, no single incident, that proves anything. And yet Madame de Rémusat had opportunities of being well informed, as she was so near Napoleon that she herself fell a victim to calumny on account of a visit of a month's duration at Pont-de-Briques (Camp of Boulogne),

[14] Prince Metternich, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 313.

[15] Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., pp. 495, 545.

[16] 'Mémoires,' t. i., pp. 192-204.

during which time she, a young woman of twenty-two, passed her evenings alone with the First Consul, who at that time was thirty-six.

We have no reasons for suspecting anything wrong in the manner in which those evenings were passed. According to Madame de Rémusat, they were spent in preparing a complete biography of Napoleon, in discussing with her metaphysics, art, and letters,[17] matters upon which he was not, as a rule, very prolix to women.

It appears, moreover, that the Consular Court showed itself somewhat incredulous respecting these nocturnal literary studies.

'When the First Consul returned to Paris,' says Madame de Rémusat herself, 'his aides-de-camp laughed at our long conversations. Madame Bonaparte was startled at the accounts she heard. . . . I found my jealous patroness somewhat cold.'[18]

Joséphine gave proof of her good sense, for, adds Madame de Rémusat :

'Without troubling herself as to whether my relations with her husband at Boulogne had been such as they were represented to her, the thought that they could only be temporary was sufficient to set her mind at rest.'[19]

We will not inquire more deeply than Madame

[17] 'Mémoires,' t. i., pp. 264 *et seq.*

[18] *Ibid.*, t. i., p. 281.

[19] *Ibid.*, t. i., p. 283.

Bonaparte, and, like her, will remain in a state of vague doubt, which, after all, does not seem to be otherwise than pleasing to Madame de Rémusat. If the latter had really wished to dissipate every doubt upon the somewhat unwonted services that she had rendered to the First Consul, she would certainly have taken the trouble to explain what compulsion was used to drag her from the bedside of her sick husband, and transport her to the abject creature depicted in her memoirs. In the latter there is no word of the violence done her, but there is one great imprudence, namely, the details that she gives of Napoleon's toilet.[20]

We must do these disgusting rumours the honour of looking into them, in order to reduce them to nothingness, and to show that they are either the result of outrageous defamation, or of the disappointment of certain feminine hopes. We will bring them face to face with authentic documents, with rebutting evidence, which will prove what were the real relations of the Emperor with those who were supposed to be his accomplices in this unnatural crime.

[20] Madame de Rémusat, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 333.

II.

Letitia Bonaparte: Filial Devotion of Napoleon—Curious Language of Madame Mère—Cordial Understanding between Mother and Son—Letitia's Parsimony—The 'Good Woman.'

'While still quite a little boy, I was initiated into the wants and privations of a large family. My father and mother have known evil days . . . six children! Heaven is just . . . my mother is a good woman.'[1] The man who spoke these words in 1811, when chief of the most powerful Empire of civilization, could not have been a bad son.

In the first part of this work we saw Napoleon Lieutenant and Captain of artillery, giving his care and his pay to help his mother. As soon as he becomes General at Toulon, he establishes in comfort his family, who had been living miserably at Marseilles. After Vendémiaire his care is immediately directed towards them. Our readers may remember the letters in which he says:

[1] Duke of Vicenza, 'Souvenirs,' part ii., t. ii., p. 192.

'You need be under no uneasiness for our family; it is abundantly provided with everything.' 'I have sent the family between fifty and sixty thousand francs (£2,000 to £2,400) in silver and assignats; do not, therefore, be anxious. The family want for nothing; I have sent them all that they need.'[2]

During the first campaign in Italy, we have seen his mother and sisters near him at Montebello and Passeriano.

'Before leaving Europe for Egypt, General Bonaparte had established all his family suitably in Paris.'[3]

As soon as he became First Consul, Napoleon desired for his mother a residence worthy of the mother of the head of the State. She was living at that time in the Hôtel de Montfermeil, Rue du Mont Blanc. Shortly afterwards Letitia, now Madame Mère, took possession of the Hôtel de Brienne, Rue Saint Dominique, which is at present the Ministry of War. Here a little Court was organized for the service of the Emperor's mother; she had five ladies-in-waiting, two chamberlains, three equerries, a chaplain, a private secretary, and a companion. Among the ladies-in-waiting

[2] 'Memoirs of King Joseph,' Letters from Napoleon to Joseph of December 31, 1795, January 11 and February 7, 1796, pp. 157 *et seq.*

[3] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 387.

was the Duchesse d'Abrantès, from whom we borrow these details.[4]

Filial devotion alone helped Napoleon to honour his mother, who, it must be admitted, was not a person to inspire great respect. How many sons who had made their own way would not have been ashamed to put into the first place in the kingdom a mother whose manners and language were so little in keeping with her exalted station! According to Lucien Bonaparte, she could speak neither Italian nor French.[5]

To prove clearly that the homage publicly rendered by Napoleon to his mother was not a calculated demonstration of his filial sentiments, we may add that Madame Bonaparte and her son lived on terms of affectionate intimacy, with some familiarities that might be considered out of place, were they not in reality the expression of the frankest devotion, and if they had not excited the liveliest admiration. Here is Letitia's account to Roederer of one scene, related by her to him with great laughter:

'It was on April 17, 1802, Easter Eve; conversation had turned upon the ceremony of the next day, the oath to be taken by the Bishops, etc. Madame Bonaparte, the mother, told me that she

[4] Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'Mémoires,' t. vi., p. 174 *et seq.*
[5] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. ii., p. 294.

had often boxed Bonaparte's ears in order to make him go to High Mass on Sundays.

'"The day before yesterday," she added, "I said to him, 'Now I need not box your ears any more to make you go to High Mass.'"

'To which he answered:

'"No; it's my turn now to box yours."

'And he suited the action to the word.'[6]

'Every Sunday,' says Monsieur de Bausset, 'Madame Mère and all the family dined at the Tuileries.'

After the divorce we find Letitia 'implored by the Emperor to come and do the honours of the Court at the palace.'[7]

The disappearance of Louis Bonaparte, in 1810, caused anxiety to the whole family. At the first news received of him, Napoleon wrote to his mother:

'I hasten to let you know that the King of Holland is at the watering-place of Töplitz. As you have probably had much uneasiness on account of his disappearance, I lose not a moment in letting you know this.'[8]

We find the exile in Elba displaying the same

[6] Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 431.

[7] De Bausset, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 6; t. ii., p. 14.

[8] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xx., p. 513, No. 16,688, Saint-Cloud, July 20, 1810.

deference. In a letter to General Bertrand, he says :

'If Madame comes, send a shut carriage to take her home. She would be too cold in an open one.'[9]

We see that in all times of his life Napoleon preserved a vivid affection for his mother. Their only subject of discord was Madame Mère's ingrained ideas of economy, of which the Emperor, who wished that she should spend the greater portion of her income, vainly tried to cure her. He could not help smiling when, in the course of these discussions, she would say :

'If ever you all come back to live on me, you will be grateful to me for what I am doing now.'[10]

Were these precautions the effect of Letitia's foresight, and did she consider that the edifice raised by the Emperor was unstable ? We think not. It must be borne in mind that Madame Mère had suffered much in her life. She knew, from painful experience, that all is possible in this world. Had she not seen herself ruined, driven out of her burning home, wandering on the coast with five children, till a vessel could be found to take her to Marseilles, where they had to live upon municipal bonds, and almost upon public charity ?

[9] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxvii., p. 425, No. 21,635, September 1, 1814.

[10] Prince Metternich, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 310.

Her maternal heart could not forget these sufferings, which arose chiefly from want of money. To this we must add that she had a natural leaning towards economy, and her obstinacy, which was in reality only an act of foresight on the part of one whom Napoleon called 'a good woman,' a title that has never been contested, will be easily understood.

III.

Joseph Bonaparte: His Dissatisfaction—Latent Hostility—Refusal of Princely Titles—The Profession of Colonel—Kingdom of Naples—'King Log'—Anger and Cordiality of the Emperor—The Kingdom of Spain—Joseph's Vanity—His Want of Dignity—France before all—Complete Disagreement—Reverses in Spain—The Emperor consoles his Brother—Culpable Indulgence.

Joseph Bonaparte, older by a year than Napoleon, was the chosen confidant of the struggles of the first painful years. To him, in sorrow as in joy, turned the first looks of the future Emperor.

As soon as Napoleon was in a position to help his senior he did not fail him. He made use of his credit as a victorious General in Italy to obtain Joseph's nomination as Ambassador to Rome in 1797.

One brother Ambassador and the other General, there was a sort of resemblance between the civil functions and the military rank. It would seem as though this balance was indispensable to Joseph's happiness, for his discontent dates from

the day upon which Napoleon was named First Consul, and there was no parallel place for him. It was not without bitterness that Joseph beheld Lebrun and Cambacérès made Consuls. It is easy to discover his regrets in the conversation reported by Miot de Mélito, and to perceive in Joseph a hostility now overt, now underhand, but firmly rooted in his mind, to the acts of his brother.

Like all discontented men, one might say like all men laden with benefits, he sees traps everywhere, and distrusts him who would be of use to him. Nothing can be more conclusive in this respect than the words reported by Miot de Mélito.

Surely, it will be said, Napoleon had done his best to bring his brother forward when he had procured him the supreme honour of signing the Peace of Amiens; of having a place in the front rank at the Fête of the Concordat, which he was to attend in a carriage drawn by eight horses; of being President of the Republic of Italy; of being Chancellor of the Senate. Not at all!

'You are quite wrong,' says Joseph Bonaparte, 'in supposing that these honours and distinctions were offered in good faith. I am convinced that they were but a trap, and I have had to be careful not to fall into it. What did the First Consul mean? To make all the other Consuls, Ministers, and Secretaries of State jealous, to

give me no means of withstanding their feelings of hatred, and, at the same time, to pay his debt to me. Should I have had any right to complain after so many tokens of regard which pointed me out, to some extent, as his successor?'[1]

These somewhat confused words are the key-note to the whole of Joseph's career, and to his relations with his brother, who was always offering, in spite of the refusals and opposition of the other.

Had Joseph been either modest or timid, his attitude would have been comprehensible, but he was neither the one nor the other.

He refused the Presidency of the Italian Republic, but because he attached the following conditions to his acceptance:

1. Reunion of Piémont to the Italian Republic.
2. Liberty to rebuild the principal fortresses.
3. Withdrawal of all French troops.[2]

The First Consul, devoted as he was to his brother, did not lose sight of the security and the interests of France. He did not think fit to permit the raising of fortresses at the gates of the country, and therefore refused to agree to Joseph's demands. In presence of the latter's inexplicable conduct, it might be thought that our information was taken from a biased source,

[1] Miot de Mélito, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 48.
[2] *Ibid.*, 'Mémoires.'

but Miot de Mélito, from whom we have borrowed, is often very hostile to the Emperor, and is, on the other hand, the especial friend and defender of Joseph Bonaparte.

Joseph's curious proceedings are confirmed by the complaints of Napoleon.

'Had Joseph chosen,' said the First Consul to Roederer, 'he could have helped me, but he refuses everything that I wish. You saw how he shrugged his shoulders at the Chancellorship I offered him! Fancy exclaiming in the Senate that he will not be Monsieur!'[3]

In short, Joseph contradicted his brother's wishes in everything, and even did so with a certain amount of affectation. When a question arose about Madame de Staël, the avowed enemy of the First Consul, Joseph, without any disguise, openly declared himself a devoted friend of that intriguer.[4]

When the question arose of the establishment of the Empire, Napoleon found nobody more secretly opposed to his plans than his brother, and after its establishment Joseph was the first to turn into ridicule the new Government, with the titles that went with it. The Emperor's first act, notwithstanding his causes of complaint

[3] Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 495.

[4] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. ii., p. 233; Roederer, t. iii., p. 512.

against Joseph, was to name him Grand Elector and Imperial Highness. The only effect these dignities had was to drive the new Prince into a fury. He would not be called either 'Monseigneur' or Prince.

'Ether I do not understand you,' he writes, 'or you do not understand me, with your Monseigneur. I will not be called that for anyone. That title and the one of Highness are very unseemly.'[5]

Such protestations were hardly calculated to please the new Emperor, who was kept very well informed respecting his brother's opinions.

'What does Joseph want?' he asked. 'What does he claim? He puts himself into direct opposition to me, and assembles all my enemies about him. What has come to him? He does not want to be a prince. Does he imagine that the State gives him 2,000,000 francs (£80,000) a year to walk about the streets in a brown coat and low hat? His daughters do not even know that I am called Emperor; they call me Consul. It is very easy for Mr. Joseph to come here and quarrel with me! After his exhibition of temper the other day, he had only to go off to Mortefontaine to shoot and amuse himself, while I, on leaving him, had to face the whole of hostile Europe!'[6]

[5] Roederer, t. iii., p. 513. [6] *Ibid.*, t. iii., pp. 514, 515.

In spite of everything, Napoleon left no stone unturned to bring about a good understanding. He would have been delighted to satisfy Joseph's demands to the utmost, but there was more than one obstacle in the way. The Emperor was the only member of his family who did not live in a dream. He was the only one who did not imagine that he owed his elevation to a sort of Providential decree ; he knew perfectly well that he owed it to exceptional services rendered under special circumstances, and he knew even better that without great and rare talents, acquired by assiduous and daily toil, he could not have maintained himself—nay, would still fail in maintaining himself—at the head of the Government.

Nothing, therefore, in his imagination inclined him to believe that the title of brother of the Emperor brings with it great destinies. He thought, on the contrary, that if his brothers wished to gratify their ambitions, they must acquire the knowledge indispensable to the management of great interests.

In this state of mind Napoleon approached his brother. He advised him 'to join, at the camp at Boulogne, the regiment that had been given to him, to continue there to study the duties of a colonel, and after spending a month there in studying, to make a journey along the frontiers of the North and the Rhine, accom-

panied by some officers of engineers and artillery, and to visit our principal fortresses, so as to gain the knowledge at present wanting to him.'[7]

In conformity with this desire, Joseph started for Boulogne. Scarcely had he arrived there, when he, who but yesterday cared so little for the empty titles of Prince and Highness, boasted so much, and made such unseasonable use of the prerogatives of his rank, that Napoleon was obliged to write to Marshal Berthier:

'Let Soult know how annoyed I am that, in different reviews in camp, Prince Joseph has appeared otherwise than as Colonel; that nothing in an army can eclipse the Commander-in-chief. The general principle is that, at a review, a Prince-Colonel is but a Colonel. You will write to Joseph that my wishes are that he should carry out in the full sense of the word his duties as Colonel. Make him feel that he would be greatly mistaken in fancying that he, as yet, possesses the qualities necessary for leading a regiment.'[8]

The Emperor, miserable at seeing how ill his brother understood his position, said one day to Roederer:

'He thinks himself beloved by the army. He

[7] Miot de Mélito, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 249.

[8] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. x., p. 427, No. 8,762, Milan, May 20, 1805.

is like a man who spends 100,000 crowns a month on giving dinners; but what do the generals think of him for all that?'[9]

These words proved to be prophetic, and Joseph discovered the fact when, as King of Spain, 'totally ignorant of military duties,'[10] having no authority over his lieutenants, he could not make himself obeyed by his Marshals and Generals, who by their differences ensured the loss of his crown. On that day, for the first time, he realized that when Napoleon, in 1805, begged him to give serious attention to his military profession, he had another object in view besides that of merely imposing upon him a good deal of trouble.

Despite the slender satisfaction that Joseph gave by the manner in which he regarded his duties, Napoleon in 1806 conferred on him the crown of Naples. In this the Emperor resembled a father who, knowing the carelessness of his son, thinks to render him serious by charging him with a weighty responsibility, and who fails to perceive that, by so doing, he is simply providing him with a larger field for the exercise of his defects.

'I am giving my brother a splendid opportunity,' said Napoleon to Miot de Mélito, who

[9] Roederer, t. iii., p. 516.

[10] General Marbot, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 44.

was starting for Naples. 'I hope he will govern his new dominions with wisdom and firmness, and show himself worthy of all I have done for him.'[11]

While at Naples Joseph continually drew down upon himself the remonstrances of his brother. We find them vigorously expressed in the Emperor's correspondence, from which several extracts are here given:

'Do not hearken to those who wish to keep you from facing fire; you need to win your spurs. If you get a chance, expose yourself freely. As to danger, it is everywhere in a battle.'[12]

'I am surprised at the bad state of your artillery, and at the poverty-stricken condition of your army; that is the result of employing Generals whose one idea is to steal. Keep a firm hand on them. I beg but one thing of you —be master!'[13]

'I find in your speech some sentences which you must permit me to criticize. You compare the attachment of the French for my person to that of the Neapolitans for you. That might be intended for an epigram. What love can you expect from a people for whom you have done

[11] Miot de Mélito, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 280.

[12] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xi., p. 573, No. 9,738, Paris, February 2, 1806.

[13] *Ibid.*, t. xii., p. 19, No. 9,773, February 7, 1806.

nothing, and amongst whom you live by right of conquest with 40,000 or 50,000 foreigners ?'[14]

'If you let yourself become a mere King Log' (*roi fainéant*), 'if you do not keep a firm hand on the reins . . . you will never do anything.'[15]

The preceding lines show very clearly the differences of character which made the cause of interminable discussions between the two brothers. At Naples, as, later on, in Spain, Joseph imagined that, once invested with the title of King, the object was attained, and he need work no more; while Napoleon, with sound good sense, realized that the title was only an empty word, and that all must be done to preserve the throne.

The Emperor was often driven to speak with the utmost sharpness.

'I cannot help expressing to you my displeasure at your sending Neapolitan officers into my army. Yours must be a curious policy, which would place arms in the hands of my enemies!'[16]

And again:

'Your finances are deplorably conducted, apparently on metaphysical principles. Believe me, money is a very physical thing.'[17]

[14] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xii., p. 430, No. 10,132, June 3, 1806.

[15] *Ibid.*, t. xiii., p. 23, No. 10,573, July 30, 1806.

[16] *Ibid.*, t. xv., p. 462, No. 12,968, July 31, 1807.

[17] *Ibid.*, t. xvi., p. 62, No. 13,206, October 1, 1807.

It must not be concluded that the whole correspondence is on the same lines. There are hundreds of letters, and they form a complete manual of the art of governing the kingdom of Naples. Never did tutor of the royal children of France dictate to his pupils maxims better calculated to ensure them long and prosperous reigns.

We find among them recommendations of this nature:

'No one ought ever to enter your room at night except your aide-de-camp, who should sleep in the ante-chamber. Your door should be fastened on the inside, and you should not open even to your aide-de-camp until you have recognised his voice, and he ought not to knock at your door until he has taken the precaution of fastening the door of his own room, so that he can be sure that he is alone, and that no one can follow him. These precautions are of importance. . . . They may save your life.'[18]

Whenever Joseph received one of these letters of reproach, which pierced him to the quick, he did not fail to inveigh against this persecution. Had he deserved these reproaches? We will ask the question of some of his best friends. We will take first the most devoted of these—

[18] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xii., p. 423, No. 10,304, May 31, 1806.

Stanislas Girardin—and he will give us an insight into the manner in which Joseph understood his profession as King. The question of the Budget was to be settled.

'I constantly begged the King to make himself acquainted with it; such details, however, are not very amusing, and the King always put off the evil day, though I never ceased holding it out to him as having to be done. At last, one evening, he said to me:

'"To-morrow morning, on the way out to shoot, you shall read me your paper in the carriage."

'We started, and I unrolled my document in this unwonted study. I had scarcely finished the second chapter, when the King laughed, and said:

'"For mercy's sake, my dear fellow, do not go on. I leave it to you."

'I had to insist very seriously to induce the King to listen to the remainder.'[19]

A secretary of Embassy at Naples, in a private letter, writes thus:

'The King is always protesting his devotion and goodwill to the Emperor. His conduct, however, is always more or less in opposition to his words.'[20]

[19] S. Girardin, 'Journal et Souvenirs,' t. i., p. 384.

[20] Marquis de Gabriac, 'Souvenirs d'un Secrétaire d'Ambassade à Naples' (see the *Correspondant* of April 25, 1891, p. 277).

It seems to us clear that Joseph, King of Naples, followed his own will entirely, and paid little or no heed to observations that were perfectly justified. Had Joseph a shadow of a reason for considering himself the victim of what he called the tiresome and intractable temper of the Emperor? Did he not, on the contrary, among the reproaches he merited by his apathy receive valuable proofs of the confidence and hope that Napoleon placed in him? See how the Emperor wrote to him on May 4, 1807:

'I think that the habit of governing, with your talents and good natural abilities, will strengthen your character, and render you better able to manage this huge machine, if fate reserves for you a longer life than for me.'[21]

Might not this chance of succeeding the Emperor diminish the temporary annoyance caused by observations intended only to make him worthy of his high destiny?

Napoleon even sought to reassure him upon the subject of his brotherly feelings during these administrative disagreements. Joseph, in an outburst of sensibility, expressed a doubt on this subject, and Napoleon thus answered him:

'I am sorry that you should have thought you would not find your brother in the Champs-

[21] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xv., p. 189, No. 12,530, Finkenstein, May 4, 1807.

Élysées. It is natural that at forty his feelings for you should not be quite the same as at twelve, but they are more real and stronger. His affection now bears the impress of his soul.'[22]

To prove that the Emperor was at heart a simply good and cordial man, we quote a postscript to one of his letters containing numerous reproaches :

'But keep well amidst all these affairs. That is the principal thing.'[23]

The carelessness, the indolence, displayed by Joseph in his government of the kingdom of Naples, the annoyances he had caused Napoleon, did not prevent the latter from giving him the throne of Spain as soon as he had declared it vacant.

It has been said that this fresh mark of favour was only a new violence done to his brother's modest tastes. That is in every particular untrue! First, we may ask, what means could have been employed to take a man from Naples and seat him by force on the throne of Spain, and compel him to remain there against his will? There was no need of any violence, for it was not done against his will, nor did he ever go to

[22] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xiii., p. 108, No. 10,693, August 23, 1806.

[23] Baron du Casse, 'Les Rois Frères de Napoléon,' letter from Napoleon to Joseph, July 28, 1806.

Spain in consequence of reiterated orders, but it was solely the result of an agreement, of which we find traces in a conversation with Girardin, and reported by the latter in the following terms:

'One of these plans,' said the King, 'is to place the crown of Spain upon my head.'

'Would you accept it?'

'Certainly; why not?'

And Joseph concluded the conversation by saying:

'Now, I have confided a great secret to you, which must be repeated to nobody. Prepare all that is necessary, so that I may be able to leave here as soon as possible.'[24]

This seems to us much more probable than a resistance which could only be regarded as incomprehensible, seeing that the kingdom in question was of considerably more importance than that of Naples. Moreover, if we compare his conversation with Girardin with the letter written several years later, in 1813, by Joseph to the Emperor, who had decided to replace the Bourbons upon the throne of Spain, we shall see that Joseph himself, in spite of all that has been said, and that he himself has said to the contrary, was not devoid of appreciation of the advantages attaching to the sovereignty of such a kingdom.

'Reflection has only strengthened my first

[24] Girardin, 'Journal et Souvenirs,' t. ii., pp. 69, 70.

thought. The re-establishment of the Bourbons in Spain would be fraught with the most fatal consequences both to Spain and to France. Spain can only be made happy by me.'[25]

Joseph denied himself none of the satisfactions of vanity that had flattered the ancient monarchs of Spain.

'King Joseph,' says his faithful companion,[26] 'perhaps hardly concealed sufficiently the pleasure he experienced in being surrounded by the brilliant Court of Charles IV., and in having at his orders titled men, covered with the richest embroidery, and wearing diamonds of great value.'

His pleasure was of short duration ; the pacification of the country was impossible, in spite of the sacrifices of men and money made by Napoleon, who suffered his first reverses in Spain. Owing to his want of prestige, Joseph could not secure, in the absence of the Emperor, the sole and firm command of the army which is necessary in every army in presence of an enemy ; the Marshals, grown gray in a career of uninterrupted successes, arranged amongst themselves the plans of the campaign, without coming to any agreement, and without taking the opinion of the King, who ought to have sanctioned them.

[25] Baron du Casse, 'Les Rois Frères de Napoléon,' p. 62, letter from Joseph to Napoleon.

[26] Girardin, 'Journal et Souvenirs,' t. ii., p. 79.

It is then that Joseph must have felt how much harm he had done himself in not following exactly the advice given him by the Emperor, to acquire personal bravery, without which the title of King is nothing.

Seeing the piteous figure presented by his brother in Spain, Napoleon said:

'When the King commands, the soldiers behave as though they had received no orders. They have no more confidence in him than they would have in the Empress.'[27]

The most complete disagreement existed between the two brothers. It could not be otherwise, seeing the absolute difference in their ideas. Napoleon, when he arrogated to himself the right of disposing at will of the crown of Spain, thought much less about that country than he did about the interests of France. No one, we presume, can imagine for an instant that the Emperor's only ambition was to render the Spaniards happy and contented. He had no objection to their being so, but before all else he intended, and rightly, that the Spanish Government, offspring of his will, should contribute to the prosperity of the French Empire.

Joseph did not at all share this view. His whole programme is contained in a sentence from one of his letters to his wife:

[27] Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 537.

'If it be supposed that I am going to govern Spain merely for the good of France, they need not expect that of me.'[28]

Now, that was exactly what the Emperor did expect of him. From these opposite views sprang conflicts of all sorts which were the primary cause of the tension between the two brothers at the time when Joseph declared himself 'persecuted' by Napoleon. No doubt the latter did not spare repeated and most cutting words of blame, as, for instance, when he said of his brother:

'Another charge that I have to bring against him is that he has made himself a Spaniard. French people can no longer approach him. He only employs Spanish ministers. The King must be French; Spain must be French. It was for France that I conquered Spain!'[29]

No one can say what would have happened had Joseph Bonaparte scrupulously followed the instructions of the Emperor. But the fact remains that, in pursuing his chimera of gaining the heart of the Spaniards, the King failed to preserve his crown, in spite of the support of the best armies of France.

The attitude of Napoleon towards his brother

[28] Du Casse, 'Les Rois Frères de Napoléon,' p. 37, letter from Joseph to Queen Julia, Madrid, July 15, 1810.

[29] Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 538.

amid the disasters in Spain, which struck him so hard, is very interesting. We find no recriminations at the result of a system he had always discountenanced, no abandonment—not even moral abandonment—of the man whom he reasonably might, to a great extent, hold responsible for these calamities. On the contrary, it was Napoleon who brought consolation to Joseph, who raised his courage, who sustained him during these events which were lowering, before all Europe, the Imperial glory. Read his letters; they nearly all end with words of this kind:

'Keep well. Be gay and of good heart, and never doubt of complete success.'[30]

When the Emperor heard of the disastrous capitulation of General Dupont at Baylen,[31] he almost apologized for having brought such trials upon his brother:

'The knowledge that you are face to face, my dear brother, with events outside what you are accustomed to, as well as outside your natural character, distresses me.'

And after expressing his own personal chagrin at the capitulation, he concludes with these words:

[30] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xvii., p. 408, No. 14,222, Bayonne, July 21, 1808.

[31] Dupont, with a large army, surrendered to the Spanish forces under General Castanos, July 19, 1808. He was afterwards appointed War Minister by Louis XVIII.—*Translator.*

'Let me know that you are in good spirits, well in health, and growing accustomed to soldiering. This is a grand opportunity for studying the profession.'[32]

It would be impossible to gain a better idea of the permanent relations between the two brothers than from the following letter:

'My brother, I do not answer your letter, which seems to me to display some temper; that is a principle I long since adopted with you. You are too clever not to see that it is the only thing I can do when you write so to me. Neither will I ever discuss the past with you again, unless you ask me to, and it is to serve you as a guide for the future. But as long as you are convinced that nothing could have been done better than it has been, I must leave you to your belief, and not cause you pain, for the past is always irremediable.'[33]

Once again we will ask those who contradict us to point out where they find the man who is said to be brutal, violent, incapable of brooking the smallest resistance. In our opinion, if there be any reproach to be directed against Napoleon, it is for not having been equal to the manly resolution which commanded him to sacrifice his brother.

[32] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xvii., p. 428, No. 14,243, August 3, 1808.

[33] *Ibid.*, t. xvii., p. 520, No. 14,336, September 17, 1808.

For many years he endured all the vexations produced by Joseph's conduct; he endured the misfortunes which were its natural result, and he never took the energetic step amply justified by the circumstances which ultimately brought about the loss of Spain and the weakening of the Imperial power.

We know that, faithful to a plan adopted invariably by those who secretly desire the consolidation, if not the aggrandisement, of their position, Joseph expressed several times in an underhand manner a desire to return to his beloved tranquillity at Mortefontaine. Napoleon was not mistaken when he said to Roederer:

'Joseph is quite incapable of living in retreat. He thinks he could live at Mortefontaine. He flatters himself.'[34]

The Emperor in saying this was so little mistaken, that we have seen Joseph, in 1813, declaring himself to be the only man who can govern Spain, while he entreats Napoleon not to restore the Bourbons.

It must be admitted that these disagreements between the two brothers were only on the surface. When the evil days came, in 1814, it was Joseph who, to the best of his ability, took the lead in the Government of Paris, and while occupied in those functions his loyalty and goodwill

[34] Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 549.

are beyond all criticism. But, as will have been already perceived, it is not our province to write the history of each individual, but to bring into prominence the gentleness and tolerance of Napoleon. We have not undertaken a comparative study ; our only object is to show that the Emperor was not a madman, striking out right and left, and making use of his power to tyrannize over all who approached him, beginning with his relations. This remark (we beg that it may be borne in mind) applies to all the personages who figure in this work.

In the succinct notice that we have given of Napoleon's relations with his elder brother, beginning with childhood, and going on through the vicissitudes of their early years, to the splendours of the Imperial reign, we think that we have sufficiently shown that in his heart of hearts Napoleon always preserved an affectionate, brotherly feeling for Joseph, which was as solid as it was valuable.

IV.

Lucien Bonaparte: Napoleon's care of him from Childhood —Member of the Council of Five Hundred—The 18 Brumaire—The Duumvirate—Minister of the Interior—Prevarications—Resignation—Ambassador to Spain—His Good Fortune—The Peace of Badajoz—Widower—Meets Madame Jouberthon—Marriage against Napoleon's Will —Fury of the First Consul—Violent Measures—Reasons of State—The Order of Succession to the Throne—Opposition to the Empire in Italy—Expansion at Elba—Lucien in Paris in 1815—Princely Honours—Last Relations between the Two Brothers.

Lucien was ten years old, and Napoleon sixteen, when the latter first began to occupy himself with the education of this younger brother. In 1785 Napoleon was in communication with the director of the little seminary at Aix, with a view to the reception in that establishment of his brother 'Luciano,' as he calls him.[1]

The Revolution diverted Lucien's thoughts from his religious vocation, and he threw himself ardently into politics. His eccentricities in his

[1] Collection of Monsieur de Coston at Montélimar, quoted by Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. i., p. 512.

new career were such as to reap the reward of arrest as a 'suspect' at Saint Chamond in 1795, where he held an inspectorship under the War Office. He was imprisoned at Aix, and to obtain his release 'required the influence of his brother Napoleon, who obtained for him a Commissionership with the armies of Germany and of the North.' Our quotation is from a work recently published anonymously, and attributed to a descendant of Lucien Bonaparte.[2]

When he was about to start for Egypt, Napoleon wished to take Lucien with him, but the latter declined, preferring to go to Corsica, in the hope of being elected as a deputy. Notwithstanding his youth, he was successful. It was thanks to this election that he was a member of the Council of Five Hundred, and that on the 18th Brumaire he played a part which, though important, was not quite as much so as he and many others would have us believe.

The Directory, unpopular in the country, was threatened, and signs of the fact were not wanting, by a military *coup-de-main*. Those who saw clearly thought that a military revolution was imminent, and a party was formed within the Council of Five Hundred, who sought to direct the movement, lest it should overwhelm them.

[2] 'Le Prince Lucien Bonaparte et sa Famille,' p. 5, Paris, 1889.

Many meetings were held,[3] of which the real chiefs were Sieyès and Talleyrand. Several names were put forward before that of Bonaparte, who was then in Egypt, was thought of: Moreau, Joubert, Macdonald, d'Hédouville,[4] and even the Duke of Brunswick.[5] Nobody, not even his brother, thought of Napoleon. Lucien himself tells us so in his memoirs:

'I so little expected Napoleon's return that I had embraced with eagerness the hope that Sieyès founded upon the victories and virtues of Joubert. His early end seemed to us a public calamity. I spoke to Jourdan on behalf of Sieyès.'[6]

This attitude was not that of an ardent supporter of Bonaparte's candidature. Moreover, Lucien expressly tells us so, and adds that the idea arose with Sieyès.[7] However, when once Napoleon had returned from Egypt, and when all the chances seemed to be in his favour, Lucien was very glad to do all in his power to secure the success of the plans that depended on his brother.

This combination certainly opened a large vista

[3] Fouché, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 118.

[4] Talleyrand, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 270; Gohier, i. 221; Fouché, i. 116; Lucien Bonaparte, i. 241.

[5] Roederer, t. iii., p. 449.

[6] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. i., p. 241. (The authenticity of these memoirs is vouched for by the author of 'Lucien Bonaparte et sa Famille,' p. 8.)

[7] *Ibid.*

to the young Deputy, who was inclined to think highly of his political talents. We agree with Fouché in thinking that Lucien then conceived the idea of establishing 'a sort of Consular Duumvirate,' which would give him the civil and Napoleon the military power.

Instinctive fraternal affection, interest for the whole family, and secret hopes of sharing power—such were, beyond a doubt, the motives that impelled Lucien to take an active part in the *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire. His conduct was devoted, incontestably, it was even efficacious, in so far as he knew by experience how vain were the Parliamentary declamations which alarmed Napoleon, who had braved bullets on many battlefields without flinching. Lucien Bonaparte rendered services to his brother; what more natural, even supposing that his personal interest had not been a strong motive power?

But he can no more claim the merit of the victory than after a battle a general of division could claim to have gained the day because he had commanded part of a charge. Even supposing, and it is by no means proved, that, when Lucien saw his brother silenced by the objurgations of the deputies, he took his place for an instant in the direction of the movement, he was only a good workman in the successful cause, and nothing more.

Napoleon, who did not feel himself called upon to share the supreme power with his brother, was not ungrateful; his first Consular act was to appoint him Minister of the Interior.

The new Minister put a good face upon his ill-fortune; he considered it wiser to enrich himself than to grumble, and that was perhaps the only practical idea that ever took root in Lucien's brain. He used his official position so as to obtain the greatest benefits from it. We read in a letter from the Ambassador of Prussia to his Sovereign:

'Lucien Bonaparte abuses his authority to enrich himself by concessions of monopolies, and by all the apparatus of former administrative abuses.'[8]

'The result was,' says Fouché,[9] 'that Lucien, by abusing his credit and his position, by trafficking in licences for the exportation of corn, was constantly made the object of stories and rumours.'

We find in Constant's memoirs[10] the confirmation of the story relating to corn:

'Lucien, being Minister of the Interior, received an order from the First Consul not to allow any corn to leave the territory of the Republic. Our stores were full, and France was abundantly provided; but such was not the case

[8] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. i., p. 434.

[9] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 187.

[10] Constant, t. ii., p. 153.

in England, where scarcity was making itself severely felt. It is not known how the matter was managed, but the greater part of this corn crossed the Straits of Dover.'

On the other hand, Miot de Mélito assures us that,

'If at the outset of his career Napoleon was obliged to shut his eyes to the rascalities of men like Talleyrand, Lucien Bonaparte, Bourrienne, and the dishonest subalterns whom they employed, he was not ignorant of them.'[11]

According to the same author, it required nothing less to triumph over Napoleon's weakness for his brother than the personal intervention of Moreau, speaking in the name of the army,[12] jealous for the honour of its chief, which had been compromised by Lucien.

The First Consul was obliged to yield to the pressure of his brothers in arms, but, while he obliged Lucien to resign his office, he did his utmost to provide him with a brilliant compensation.

'He had,' says Girardin, 'for Lucien moments of hatred and love ; he felt for him what a man may feel for a mistress to whom he is devoted, but against whom he fancies he has a ground of complaint.'[13]

[11] 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 301. [12] Miot de Mélito, 'Mémoires.'
[13] S. Girardin, 'Journal et Souvenirs,' t. i., p. 197.

This attitude is confirmed by Lucien himself, who, hurt at being compelled to resign his office, after a violent scene, admits that Napoleon's last words to him were:

'Come and join my circle every evening; I breakfast alone every morning, at eleven o'clock. Come when you like.'[14]

One year, day for day, after the *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire, Lucien Bonaparte started for Madrid, concealing his real disgrace under his appointment as Ambassador to Spain.

'He started in search of that fortune that his prudish fellow-citizens had attempted to prevent him from gaining too rapidly. This time he was going to succeed. Yet a few months, and he would be Lucien the millionaire, the richest of his family.'[15]

He had not long to wait for an opportunity of making a speedy fortune as Ambassador. When the French army entered Portugal, by Salamanca, 'in its distress the Court of Lisbon thought to find safety by lavishing its treasures upon the invaders. Direct negotiations were opened with Lucien, and on June 6, 1801, the preliminaries of peace were signed at Badajoz for the consideration of a secret subsidy of 30,000,000 francs (£1,200,000), which were divided between the

[14] Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 350.

[15] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. i., p. 435.

brother of the First Consul and the Prince of Peace.[16] This was the foundation of Lucien's immense fortune.'[17]

The First Consul, who had intended to occupy Lisbon, was indignant, but once more he recoiled before a scandal which must have been crushing to his brother.

It was after the return of Lucien to Paris that the incident occurred which brought about the startling rupture between the brothers. It originated in the second marriage of Lucien Bonaparte.

In 1794, at the age of twenty, he had married Catherine Boyer, sister of the innkeeper with whom he lodged at Saint Maximin. He was left a widower in 1800. At that painful moment the First Consul felt keenly for his brother's despair.

'You have lost an excellent wife,' he said; 'I hope that I may never have need of the courage which is necessary to you to support such a blow.'[18]

Lucien soon recovered from his grief, which at first appeared as though it were to last for ever,

[16] Don Manuel de Godoy, favourite of Charles IV. of Spain, exiled by Ferdinand VII.; died in Paris 1851.—*Translator.*

[17] Fouché, 'Mémoires,' t. i., p. 242; Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. ii., p. 119.

[18] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. i., p. 385.

and in the spring of 1802 met, at a somewhat equivocal party, Madame Jouberthon, a very pretty woman of four-and-twenty, with whom he fell violently in love.

Notwithstanding the formal opposition of the First Consul, who had 'even forbidden the Mayor of the tenth arrondissement to celebrate the marriage,'[19] Lucien wedded his mistress.

Great was Napoleon's wrath when, at a concert at Malmaison, he chanced to hear this news.[20] In his fury he ordered Lucien to quit French territory, and signified to him that he would never recognize his marriage, made, as it was, in defiance of his will.

Here, in truth, we find ourselves face to face with a movement of violent irascibility and of absolute despotism that can only be explained by reasons of State. We must, therefore, see whether this motive really existed.

We must first dispossess ourselves of the idea that Napoleon's pride was annoyed because his brother had made a middle-class marriage. His constant kindness to his sister-in-law, daughter of the innkeeper, precludes that supposition. And when we have seen him, as Commander-in-Chief, give his sister Pauline to Leclerc, the miller's son; when we have seen him, as Consul, give his

19 Meneval, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 108.
20 *Ibid.*, t. iii., p. 314.

sister Caroline to Murat, an ex-draper's assistant, we cannot reproach him with coveting princely alliances for his family.

Was he angry at not having been consulted, or because his advice had been rejected? That would have been childish. No; there was a weightier reason that caused Napoleon's wrath.

It was the end of 1803; the question of the eventual succession to the Consulate was in all men's minds. In principle, the establishment of the Empire, with heredity, was resolved upon. In the event of Joseph leaving no male issue, the succession came by right to the children of Lucien Bonaparte.

What a weapon Lucien had forged for the adversaries of the hereditary principle! Their opposition might be materially strengthened by the fact that the future heir to the Crown had been born several months before the marriage of his parents.

Napoleon's anger will be understood by anyone who puts himself in his place, whether from the point of view of moral prejudice, or from that of personal together with general interest. It must be added that Lucien's second wife did not enjoy the best of reputations. Her intimacy with Lucien before marriage gives colour to the statement made by authors who describe Madame Jouberthon as 'having been supposed to have led

a very fast life,'[21] and we cannot be surprised to find the Chief of the State showing some desire to maintain the dignity of his family.

There is no doubt whatever that, in marrying secretly, at Plessis Chamant, Madame Jouberthon, divorced wife of a stockbroker who had fled abroad,[22] Lucien was marrying his mistress.

With an object for which we cannot blame him, the author of 'Le Prince Lucien Bonaparte et sa Famille,' who is silent all through his work as to the date of the marriage, gives it at the end, in his Genealogy, as having taken place in 1802. That is a material mistake which, however, we should have passed over were it not of importance in the physiological determination of Napoleon's inmost feelings to state the reasons for his extreme measures.

According to the Genealogy above quoted, the first child of Lucien and his second wife, Madame Jouberthon, was born on March 24, 1803, while, according to Miot de Mélito, the marriage was not celebrated until the end of October of the same year. This date is so exact that in the month of July Napoleon was not angry with his brother, as he had named him a Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour, had designated him to be one of the seven members of the Administrative

[21] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 152.

[22] Miot de Mélito, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 109.

Council of the Order, and had given him the 'sénatorerie' of Popelsdorf, worth 30,000 livres (£1,200) a year.[23]

Thus, when the Empire was established, Napoleon, had he approved his brother's marriage, would have found himself obliged to present to France, as his natural heir, a son of Lucien, born of an unrecognizable connection, and only made legitimate by a tardy marriage. This idea raised Napoleon's fury, and the certain proof of it is contained in a letter written in 1805 by Lucien himself to Talleyrand, in which he says:

'The Emperor would rather see a prospect of the Bourbons returning to the throne of France than of one of Madame Jouberthon's children ascending it.'[24]

This was the chief reason that induced the First Consul to declare that he never would recognise the marriage with Madame Jouberthon, and which decided him to confirm by the violence of his outburst his decision on the point. They who have only seen in Napoleon's anger the empty pleasure of going against the wishes of his brother, or the childish presumption that he could dispose as he pleased of the hearts of others, are completely mistaken. Napoleon had but one object: to secure the respectability of the supreme power

[23] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. ii., pp. 413, 414.
[24] *Ibid.*, t. iii., pp. 111, 112.

entrusted to his care. Under no circumstances did he ever fail in that portion of his task.

What did it matter to Napoleon, except for reasons of State, whether his brother lived or not with a certain woman? It was a matter of perfect indifference to him. Indeed, he said so himself in a letter written in 1807 to Joseph Bonaparte:

'I must say, however, that I am perfectly ready to restore to Lucien his rights as a French prince, and to recognise all his daughters as my nieces, provided he will begin by annulling his marriage with Madame Jouberthon, either by means of a divorce or by any other means. In that case all his children would be restored to their proper position. If it be true that Madame Jouberthon be again enceinte, and that she has a daughter, I see no objection to adopting the child; if it be a son, I will consider it as Lucien's, but not of a marriage acknowledged by me, and I will consent to render him capable of inheriting a sovereignty which I will confer upon his father, but without giving this son any right to succeed his father in his real rank, nor to be called to the succession of the Empire.

'Once let Lucien divorce Madame Jouberthon, and establish himself in a foreign country (she has a great title in Naples or somewhere); then if he likes to summon her to him, provided it

never be in France, and live with her as he likes, but not as a princess his wife, I will put no obstacles in his way, for it is policy alone that I care about; beyond that I will interfere neither with his tastes nor his passions. With impatience I await from you a plain, straightforward answer, especially that part of it that concerns Lolotte.'[25]

The person thus affectionately spoken of as Lolotte was the eldest of Lucien's daughters, who was to come, and eventually came, to Paris with the Emperor's consent. The family were delighted at this visit, approved by Napoleon, hoping that it might serve to bring about a reconciliation between the two brothers.

'As soon as her clothes are ready,' writes Madame Mère to her son Lucien, 'I will take Lolotte to the Emperor, and I am convinced that she will be well received. I will let you know next day. Heaven grant that I may at the same time be able to announce to you something that is still wanting to my happiness—your reconciliation with him!'[26]

We can no longer doubt that, while Lucien saw in Napoleon's conduct nothing but arbitrary annoyances, the latter had the most conciliatory

[25] Du Casse, 'Les Rois Frères de Napoléon,' p. 20, letter from Napoleon to Joseph, Milan, December 20, 1807.

[26] Collection Charavay, 'Manuel de l'Amateur d'Autographes,' second year, p. 75.

intentions, but did not think that he would be doing right in handing over to public disesteem the dynastic institution then reigning in France.

Far from understanding the elevated interests which impelled Napoleon, Lucien never ceased, during his stay in Rome, from behaving as though he were a personal enemy of the Emperor, whose only crime, in reality, was his determination not to sacrifice the destinies of the throne of France to necessities, honourable, no doubt, from a sentimental point of view, but incompatible with the Imperial constitution.

A man may prefer to Court dignities the happiness of the woman whom he has chosen in the exercise of his free will; that is comprehensible. But it is more difficult to admit that a brother, forgetful of the past, regardless of the interest of his family and the tranquillity of his country, should, in the face of Europe (already too much inclined to contest the solidity of the Imperial power), present the dangerous spectacle of implacable hostility by braving the Emperor.

This was, however, the regrettable part played by Lucien in Rome. Look through his own memoirs, you will find him encouraging Frenchmen to forget their duties; you will find him railing against the Imperial Government with Masséna and Gouvion Saint-Cyr, and compounding with General Mallet, who afterwards brought

about the *coup d'état* of 1812; you will find him bringing into prominence his friendship for the Pope, at that time an enemy of the Emperor; you will find him waiting to enter France and proclaim a Republic, until the Emperor has lost a battle which, he fondly hopes, will bring about the downfall of the throne; you will find him, during the Jéna campaign, making no secret of his sympathies with the Prussian Minister, and predicting, with undisguised pleasure, the defeat of the French; you will find him, lastly, visiting Canova, at that time engaged upon a statue of the Emperor, and asking him 'how he could consent to employ his great talents in immortalizing a hero who was destroying his fellow-countrymen while pretending to lead them to conquest.'[27]

To these factious proceedings the Emperor opposed the kindest feelings, and always showed himself anxious for a reconciliation. He it was who made the first advances by proposing to his brother an interview, which has remained celebrated, at Mantua, on December 12, 1807. There were discussed the propositions mentioned above in the letter to Joseph. Lucien treated Napoleon arrogantly, and the end of their interview left the breach between them wider than before. Notwithstanding all this, the Emperor,

[27] Jung, 'Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,' t. iii., pp. 59-79.

in his heart, never ceased to earnestly desire to make friends with Lucien, and this is proved by this passage from a letter written in 1810 by Pauline Bonaparte to her brother:

'I have spoken to the Emperor; mamma has undertaken to let you know what he said. He seems anxious to know what you want, in order to put an end to all this, and to see you reunited to us. It would give me great pleasure.'[28]

After the abdication of Napoleon, Lucien, who, it appears, had not felt himself strong enough to re-establish a Republic in France, wrote to the Emperor at Elba. The latter sent the following memorandum to him in answer:

'To write to my brother Lucien that I have received his letter of June 11; that I appreciate the sentiments expressed; that he is not to be surprised at receiving no answer from me, because I write to nobody. I have not even written to Madame.'[29]

A certain relaxation of the strain in the relations between the two brothers was, however, produced from that time. We find in the memoirs of Lucien[30] the following sentence:

[28] Collection Charavay, 'L'Amateur d'Autographes,' second year, p. 95.

[29] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxvii., p. 402, No. 21,590; memorandum for the Grand Marshal, Porto-Ferraio, July 17, 1814.

[30] Jung, t. ii., p. 367.

'I must here note that, by a somewhat strange coincidence, I have had business transactions with the Sovereign of the Island of Elba concerning my blast-furnace at Canino, which is used solely for smelting ore from that island.'

On the Emperor's return to the Tuileries in 1815, Lucien made him a spontaneous offer of assistance. It is difficult to say what were the exact conditions imposed by Napoleon. A story told by Father Maurice of Brescia says that Lucien went to stay at the Post Inn at Charenton shortly after the return from Elba. From Charenton an active correspondence was carried on between Lucien and Joseph Bonaparte, and then Father Maurice was summoned to Paris by the Emperor.[31]

During the course of this correspondence, and in these journeyings to and fro, the bases of an agreement, whereof the details have remained undiscovered, were no doubt settled. We may suppose that the existence of the King of Rome, direct heir to the Crown, made the Emperor less rigid now that there was less danger of Lucien's male offspring succeeding. On the other hand, it is clear that Lucien made a great concession by coming to Paris early in 1815 without his wife, whom he left at Rufinella, his property in Italy.[32] We incline to believe that at that

[31] Jung, t. iii., p. 232. [32] *Ibid.*, t. iii., p. 242.

critical moment, when the all-important object was to watch over the affairs of the Empire, menaced by the Holy Alliance, the settlement of domestic affairs, and the decision regarding Lucien's place in the family, were indefinitely postponed.

Owing to circumstances, this decision was never published. The republicanism of Lucien was not dazzled by the honours with which he was overwhelmed, nor blinded by the title of Highness with which he was decorated, nor shocked by his princely prerogatives, of which he did not abandon one iota.

According to the 'Journal de l'Empire,' he came to Paris to the house of Cardinal Fesch, Rue du Mont-Blanc, on May 8. On the 11th the Palais Royal was assigned to him by the Emperor as a residence. He accompanied Napoleon everywhere; on the day of the 'Champ de Mai,' attired in a tunic and cloak of white velvet, embroidered with gold, Lucien was on the left of the Sovereign.

Member of the Chamber of Peers as a Prince, he was, until June 21, 1815, the last representative of the Emperor, and the last defender of the Imperial throne.

The incidents marking the close of the relations of Napoleon and Lucien are told by the latter in his memoirs.

He sent to Malmaison an emissary named Châtillon to ask for money from the Emperor, beaten, abandoned, almost ruined as he was. Napoleon, a prisoner, unable to procure funds, gave the agent of his brother, now much richer than he, 200,000 francs (£8,000) in gold, and that same evening, no doubt in consequence of a fresh application, he made over to him, into his own hand, bonds to the value of 2,000,000 of francs (£80,000) upon some of the royal forests, with the words:

'There! take them for what they are worth!'[33]

This final episode emphasizes very strongly the two characters: Lucien, always selfish, grasping, regardless of the consequences of his avidity; Napoleon, always weak, generous, forgetful of previous wrong.

[33] Jung, t. iii., p. 358.

V.

Louis Bonaparte: Paternal Duty fallen on Napoleon—Predilection for Louis—Heir to the Imperial Throne—King of Holland—Continual Complaints—Merited Reproaches—Patriotism out of Place—Endurance of the Emperor—Public Affront—A Perjurer—An Infamous Insinuation—Unpardonable Ingratitude.

The considerable wealth with which Napoleon was able at one time to endow his family was only a very small sacrifice as compared with the privations endured by Bonaparte, Lieutenant in the artillery, in order to educate his brother Louis, then a boy of twelve.

In a previous chapter we have seen how Napoleon, while a subaltern at Auxonne, with no other means than his paltry pay, three francs fifty centimes a day (2s. 6½d.), provided for the support and education of Louis. Napoleon was particularly fond of this boy, whose first steps in life he had, at the price of misery to himself, thus guided. On the day when, far from his family, the boy received his first Communion, Napoleon probably felt the extent of the duties imposed upon him by

the youth of his brother, deprived so early of paternal care.

When he succeeded in 1795 in placing him at the military school at Châlons, it was with paternal pride that he wrote to Joseph :

'I am much pleased with Louis ; he is quite coming up to the hopes and expectations I had formed of him. He is a good boy, after my own heart. Affection, quickness, health, talents, good business capabilities, generosity—he unites them all.'[1]

Fifteen years later the Emperor could write very sincerely to Louis, whom he had made King of Holland :

'I have given Holland a Prince who was almost my son.'[2]

Napoleon, like a father anxious to keep his child near him, could not bear to be separated from Louis, whom he appointed his aide-de-camp during the campaigns in Italy and Egypt. In 1802, with the evident object of looking closely after his brother's happiness, the First Consul married him to his step-daughter, Hortense de Beauharnais.

In 1804 Louis was made a General, then

[1] 'Mémoires du Roi Joseph,' t. i., p. 148, letter from Napoleon to Joseph, September 5, 1795.

[2] F. Rocquain, 'Napoléon I. et le Roi Louis,' letter from Napoleon to Louis, May 10, 1810 (not published in the correspondence).

placed in the Council of State, so as to perfect his education in all branches of official work. The following year he became Governor of Paris, and finally, in 1806, the Emperor gave him the kingdom of Holland.

The evident preference for Louis is, perhaps, more clearly marked in the conversations and discussions respecting the various titles of members of his family.

'You do not mention Louis,' said the First Consul to Roederer. 'Why this injustice to Louis? He has done more for me than any of them. He has accompanied me in all my campaigns; he is covered with wounds, and you do not mention him!'[3]

His thought was made quite evident by these words to Stanislas Girardin:

'We need not rack our brains any more to find a successor; I have found him—Louis. He has none of his brothers' defects, and all their good qualities.' 'Then,' continues the same author, 'he began singing his praises to me, showed me letters which expressed brotherly affection in every line.'[4]

By what perversion of intellect did Louis come to disappoint all the Emperor's expectations? By what aberration of mind did it chance that

[3] Roederer, 'Mémoires,' t. iii., p. 512.

[4] S. Girardin, 'Journal et Souvenirs,' t. i., p. 199.

gratitude gave place in him to the most odious suspicion?

The answer is simple: Louis was dazzled like his brother Joseph; he saw in the elevation of Napoleon a sort of predestination for the whole family. The conquests of the Emperor seemed their common patrimony. Therefore none of them owed anything to Napoleon, who, on the contrary, inasmuch as he retained the lion's share for himself, was in the debt of the others.

Having taken up this line, Louis naturally found that his royalty in Holland was not magnificent enough. From the first we find nothing but complaints and prayers for money. He will not see that he is only a budding King, and that he must endure many tribulations before reaching prosperity. Instead of proudly enjoying a position of which his origin gave him no right even to dream, he poses as a victim from the very beginning. The nature of his complaints can be easily understood from Napoleon's answers:

'You must not be too soft-hearted, nor allow yourself to be moved. Be firm. It does not depend upon you to increase the resources of your country; you do not know enough about them as yet. I myself have only been able to ameliorate the condition of France after several years.'[5]

[5] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xii., p. 535, No. 10,481, July 11, 1806

Shortly afterwards the Emperor writes as follows :

'You write me every day a tale of woe. It is not my business to pay the debts of Holland : even had I undertaken to do so, I have not the means.'[6]

Louis's mind is haunted by the one idea of behaving like a powerful sovereign of high lineage. He wishes to imitate at Amsterdam all that is done in Paris, to such an extent that Napoleon is obliged to write to him thus :

'My institutions were not made to be turned into ridicule. I have created no princes without giving them principalities. You have made marshals of men who have not done as much as my generals of brigade. For God's sake, do not make yourself ridiculous !'[7]

Was it not in Napoleon's province to make these observations upon the Government of Holland, and were they only dictated by the miserable pleasure of exercising a capricious and meddling authority ? Beyond contradiction, their object was deeper than Louis realized, or than he pretended to realize. The Emperor could per-

[6] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xii., p. 570, No. 10,534, July 21, 1806.

[7] F. Rocquain, 'Napoléon I. et le Roi Louis,' letter from Napoleon to Louis, Bayonne, May 6, 1808 (not published in the correspondence).

fectly well foresee, for instance, what a humiliation it would be to his generals, illustrious by their splendid deeds of arms, to give precedence at Court and command in war to a number of marshals of State, with no past and with no capacity.

Although Napoleon's words displayed considerable annoyance, his feelings towards Louis did not alter, as we shall see from the following lines addressed to Joseph Bonaparte:

'I am pleased with Louis on the whole. He does not pay great attention to the advice I give him, but I shall not cease doing so, and experience will soon teach him that many of the things he has done are wrong. I have blamed him for instituting his Order. The wish to found an Order does not come to one suddenly like a wish to go out hunting.'[8]

In his eagerness to employ his royal rights according to his own fancy, Louis will not remember that he owes his crown to his brother; he scarcely recognises the latter's existence.

'I hear,' writes Napoleon, 'that you are making a law about the regency. I hope that you will consult me. Perhaps you will remember that I also belong to the family. You must see that, if you have no issue, I should wish to see

[8] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xv., p. 188, No. 12,530, May 4, 1807.

Holland pass only into such hands as might suit me.'[9]

In this lecture we can trace the principal grounds of Napoleon's complaints against Louis, whose object was to preserve to Dutch politics an absolute independence of France. It mattered little to the new King whether his plans were or were not compromising to the success of those of the Emperor. Louis regarded himself as a Dutchman, and the welfare of France did not trouble him.

'Are you an ally of France or of England? I know not,' exclaimed Napoleon; and he eventually was driven to say to Louis:

'Your Majesty will find in me a brother so long as I find in you a Frenchman; but if you forget the bonds that attach you to our common country, you cannot complain if I forget those that nature has placed between us.'[10]

The relations between the two brothers, having reached this state of tension, could not fail to terminate by an explosion. Desiring to avoid this, and foreseeing many other complications, Napoleon, in 1810, resolved upon uniting Holland to France. Louis thereupon abjured the intention he had frequently expressed before, of

[9] F. Rocquain, 'Napoléon et le Roi Louis,' p. 116, Finkenstein, April 30, 1807 (not published in the correspondence).

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 117.

resigning his crown, and wrote to the Emperor as follows:[11]

'Pray consider that I was without experience, in a country difficult to manage, living from hand to mouth. I conjure your Majesty to forget everything. I promise to carry out faithfully all the conditions you impose upon me; I give you my word of honour to observe them faithfully and loyally, when I have once undertaken to do so.'[12]

Seduced by these fine promises, Napoleon, in the following terms, informs Louis of his renunciation of his projects:

'Every political reason demands that I should unite Holland to France. . . . But I see that it gives you so much pain that, for the first time, I will make my policy yield to the wish to be agreeable to you.'[13]

Is Louis, mindful of his promise, going to amend his ways and conciliate the interests of France with those of Holland, which are very secondary in the Emperor's opinion? By no means. Even his mother, in her peculiar idiom, says:

[11] Duke of Vicenza, 'Souvenirs,' part ii., t. ii., p. 185.

[12] F. Rocquain, 'Napoléon I. et le Roi Louis,' p. 247, letter from Louis to Napoleon, February 4, 1810.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 261, letter from Napoleon to Louis, March 13, 1810 (not published in the correspondence).

'Poor Louis has become a Dutchman; he is no longer a bit of a Frenchman, not a bit!'[14]

We shall find that this statement is no exaggeration if we compare it with what Napoleon says in a letter to his brother of May 20, 1810:

'Certainly, in placing you upon the throne of Holland, I thought I was seating there a French citizen, as devoted as myself to the grandeur of France and as jealous for all the interests of the mother country. Be, above all, a Frenchman and brother of the Emperor, and be certain that you will then be following the road most conducive to Holland's true interests. Why do I say all this now? The die is cast! You are incorrigible. You wish to drive away the few Frenchmen who are still about you. Listen to one who knows more than you. Quit the wrong road you are now on, and be a Frenchman at heart.'[15]

And two days later he says:

'A Frenchman has upon you the same effect as the sight of water upon a man affected with hydrophobia.'[16]

[14] 'Ce *povero Luigi* s'est fait Hollandais, et il n'est *più* Français, du tout, du tout!'—S Girardin, 'Journal et Souvenirs,' t. ii., p. 326.

[15] F. Rocquain, 'Napoléon I. et le Roi Louis,' p. 276, letter from Napoleon to Louis, May 20, 1810 (not published in the correspondence).

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 276, May 22, 1810 (not published in the correspondence).

At length the exasperation of the Emperor reached its height on learning that the *personnel* of his Embassy had been attacked in Holland.

'My brother,' he writes, 'at the very moment when you are making all these fine protestations to me, I learn that the persons belonging to my Embassy have been ill-treated at Amsterdam. I will not, therefore, again expose my ambassadors to your insults.'

And he adds ironically:

'As it was the Minister of Russia whose master placed you on your throne, it is well that you should follow his advice. Let me have no more of your contemptible phrases. For three years you have been repeating them to me, and every instant proves their utter falseness. This is the last letter I shall ever write you in my life.'[17]

The painful effect of these letters upon Louis, who considered himself injured in his dignity as a King even more than in his dignity as a man, can be imagined. It was, however, out of the question that the Emperor should tolerate an antagonism so prejudicial to the great interests of France. However sharp his words may have been, they were very excusable when he felt himself outraged by the actions of a man whom

[17] F. Rocquain, p. 277, letter from Napoleon to Louis, May 23, 1810 (not published in the correspondence).

he had brought up at the cost of cruel privations, and in whom he had placed his dearest hopes.

Were Napoleon's demands so exorbitant that they neither could nor ought to be satisfied? What did he ask? That the King of Holland, placed by him on the throne, should govern his country with regard to the interests of the Empire. Was not that absolutely natural? In the case of Holland, as in that of Spain under Joseph Bonaparte, was not the chief question that of the greatness of the one mother country, France? Who asks these questions answers them.

Napoleon, always patient, hesitated before pushing his severity to extremes. He threatened and did not act, always preserving the hope of an improvement. He waited until at length the day came when he himself, in the presence of all Europe, received the supreme affront of finding his authority disavowed. Louis, in a rash moment, joining to perjury the grossest ingratitude, quitted Holland secretly. He started for some unknown destination, indifferent to the fact that he was giving a serious blow to the prestige of the Emperor, whose supremacy, till then uncontested, was thus turned to derision by his own brother.

His flight took place on July 10, 1810. None knew what had become of the King of Holland.

Openly tricked by this impudent prank, indignant at being the dupe of such a piece of knavery, deeply wounded by such ingratitude and such a want of brotherly affection, Napoleon could yet keep his anger within limits that a revengeful and violent despot would have hardly imposed upon himself.

It must be borne in mind, too, that during that year, 1810, Napoleon was in a position to inflict upon his brother any punishment he chose, without anyone in Europe having the will or the power to interfere. But no ideas of vengeance cross the mind of the man who is supposed to be blinded by fits of passion. When, by an exemplary chastisement, he might save his compromised dignity, he contents himself with seeking to hide the ridiculous situation from the eyes of the world. There is no question of punishing Louis.

The Emperor anxiously writes in all directions. To Jerôme Bonaparte he says :

'If you discover whither Louis has betaken himself, you will be doing him a kindness in advising him to return to Paris, and to retire to Saint Leu, and thus cease to be the laughing-stock of Europe.'[18]

Eventually, on July 19, Louis was discovered

[18] F. Rocquain, 'Napoléon I. et le Roi Louis,' July 13, 1810 (not published in the correspondence).

to be at Töplitz, in Bohemia, in the dominions of Napoleon's father-in-law.

Did he immediately demand the surrender of the fugitive? No; he hastened to communicate with all the family. Instead of satisfying his resentment, he forbade them to reproach his brother, and wished that it should be given out to Europe that it was he who had been wrong in conferring sovereignty upon Louis. The circular sent out by the Minister for Foreign Affairs was 'to tend to completely excuse the King of Holland, who, owing to a chronic illness, was not a suitable man.'[19]

We will not deny that political calculation entered into this manner of presenting the case. All that we care to establish is that the Emperor had perfect command over himself, and could resist inclinations to anger even when most legitimate.

Napoleon's calumniators would have us believe that Louis had been horror-stricken when he imagined that Hortense de Beauharnais had been Napoleon's mistress, and that he had afterwards been made to marry her. We do not know whether Louis ever shared this disgusting conviction, but nothing shows that he did. In any case,

[19] F. Rocquain, 'Napoléon I. et le Roi Louis,' p. 29, letter from Napoleon to Monsieur de Champagny, July 21, 1810 (not published in the correspondence).

we have proved in a former chapter how utterly groundless this monstrous and gratuitous imputation was. We called as our witnesses friends and enemies, and they all gave it the most categorical denial. We shall find another in the attitude of the Emperor towards the King of Holland and his wife. Here is his advice given to Louis, who guarded his wife with the most intolerable jealousy:

'Your quarrels with the Queen are reaching the ears of the public. You treat your young wife as you might treat a regiment. You have the best and most virtuous wife in the world, and you are making her miserable. Let her dance as much as she pleases; it is fitting at her age. My wife is forty, and yet from a field of battle I have written to her to go to a ball; and do you expect a woman of twenty, who still has all her illusions, to see her life slipping away, and to live either like a cloistered nun or like a nurse, always occupied in washing her baby? Make the mother of your children happy. There is only one way to do it, and that is, to show her great tenderness and confidence. Unfortunately, your wife is too virtuous. If she were inclined to flirt she would lead you by the nose.'[20]

Supposing that Napoleon had ever had Hor-

[20] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xv., p. 25, No. 12,294, Finkenstein, April 4, 1807.

tense as his mistress, would he have complained so much at the care that was taken to keep her away from all worldly seductions ? Would a lover willingly be so bold in taking to task a jealous husband ?

The most ordinary impartiality, after so many other proofs, ought to prevent any credence being placed in these infamous accusations, especially when the profound attachment of Napoleon to his brother is so well known.

Although he spared Louis all punishment after their rupture, Napoleon could never forgive him. His heart never healed from the blow inflicted by this monstrous ingratitude. Though Louis was allowed to return to France in 1814, at the entreaties of Joseph, the Emperor, even in his days of misfortune, could never believe in the sincerity of the tardy demonstrations of the brother whom he had so much loved.

VI.

Jerôme Bonaparte: Deference to Napoleon—Brought up at the Tuileries—Incorrigible Extravagance—Service in the Navy—Paternal Advice of Napoleon—At Baltimore—The Paterson Marriage—American Policy and Foresight—Motives for Napoleon's Conduct—Laws of Family and State—Rupture with Miss Paterson—Reconciliation—Dignities—The Kingdom of Westphalia—Marriage with Princess of Wurtemberg—Napoleon's Affection for his Sister-in-law—The Court at Cassel—Waste and Misery—Annoyance of the Emperor—Pleasantness of Jerôme—Weakness of Napoleon—Admirable Attitude of Queen Catherine.

JERÔME, the youngest of Napoleon's four brothers, was the only one who never put himself into direct opposition to the Emperor. He was indocile; he caused as much trouble as, perhaps even more than, his brothers; but what distinguishes him from them is that after each fault he reiterated assurances of absolute submission, and was never tired of disobeying and of protesting his good intentions.

This relative deference may be explained by



the fact that Jerôme, younger than Napoleon by fifteen years, never knew him except as the chief who had attained the highest positions. This supremacy, to which he was accustomed from childhood, affected his imagination, and imposed upon him a lasting respect, which neither Joseph, nor Lucien, nor Louis, actors and companions with Napoleon in the struggle, ever felt.

His ignorance of the early difficulties almost authorized Jerôme to believe himself a son of an opulent and well-born family, and rendered his characteristic defects more pardonable. His immoderate love of luxury, his pecuniary recklessness, which amounted to profusion, an immorality of life borrowed from the Courts of the eighteenth century, were the causes of the unceasing remonstrances of the Emperor, who, notwithstanding his displeasure, was for ever seeking to improve his brother's position, and thought he had scarcely done enough for Jerôme when he carved out the kingdom of Westphalia for him.

Before leaving for Egypt, Napoleon placed Jerôme at the college of Juilly.

'Send your children to Juilly,' he said to Arnault. 'I have just put my brother there, and will pay their pension with his.'[1]

No sooner was the First Consul installed at the

[1] Arnault, 'Souvenirs d'un Sexagénaire,' t. iv., p. 453.

Tuileries than he brought his brother to the palace, and continued his education under the very best masters.[2]

From that time forward Napoleon had frequently to reprimand Jerôme, who became most recklessly extravagant, buying everything he wished for, running up enormous bills with all the Court tradespeople. Want of care in money-matters was, as is well known, one of the things that Napoleon most disapproved. He had daily discussions with Joséphine upon the subject; he had the same with Jerôme.

The First Consul's annoyance can be imagined when he received from Biennais (*Au singe violet*), in the Rue St. Honoré, a bill for 16,000 francs (£640), the price of a magnificent dressing-case,[3] containing all that could be dreamed of by luxury, including razors, and shaving-dishes of all sizes in enamel and silver.

'It contained everything,' says the Duchesse d'Abrantès, 'except the beard to enable the purchaser to make use of it. He was fifteen at the time.'[4]

To put a stop to this reckless expenditure, Napoleon, who 'talked to and scolded Jerôme as

[2] Baron du Casse, 'Les Rois Frères de Napoléon'; 'Mémoires du Roi Jérôme,' t. i., p. 18.

[3] 'Mémoires du Roi Jérôme,' t. i., p. 27.

[4] 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 423.

though he had been his son,'[5] determined on putting him into the navy, and entered him as a second-class midshipman[6] under Admiral Gantheaume, to whom he wrote:

'I send you, citizen Admiral, the citizen Jerôme Bonaparte to serve his apprenticeship in the navy. You know that he needs to be kept in order, and to make up for lost time. Require of him that he should carry out with exactitude the duties of the service he is embracing.'[7]

Soon after he insists again:

'I recommend Jerôme to you, not in order that he should be made comfortable, but that he should be made to work. Tell him to accustom himself to the naval profession, and that in three years he will have travelled some thousands of miles, and will then be in a position to command a brig.'[8]

When Jerôme Bonaparte, scarcely seventeen years of age, made himself noticed by his pluck, intelligence, and aptitude on his first expedition, the joy of Napoleon was unbounded. His satisfaction, however, did not last long, for two years had not passed when the young man, then a Lieutenant, suddenly, while on a cruise in the

[5] Constant, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 66. [6] Du Casse, p. 166.

[7] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. vi., p. 515, No. 5,193, November 22, 1800.

[8] *Ibid.*, t. vi., p. 524, No. 5,211, December 10, 1800.

Antilles, committed an act of folly which was the origin of the quarrel between the brothers.

After a disagreement with his Admiral, Villaret-Joyeuse, Jerôme, on July 20, 1803, abandoned the command of his brig *L'Épervier*, and crossed to America. He appeared at Baltimore at the end of the month.

He had scarcely reached Baltimore when he fell violently in love with Miss Elizabeth Paterson, the very pretty daughter of a rich merchant in the town. He paid great attentions to the young American, and she did not appear disinclined to listen to him. Affairs moved so fast that at the beginning of October they began to talk of marriage.

It was well known in Baltimore how kind the First Consul had been to his younger brother, and a marriage with a member of the Bonaparte family was an unexpected piece of good-fortune for the Patersons. Consequently, instead of opposing the project, the whole family, headed by the father, helped it on by every means in their power. This little intrigue naturally became quickly known to the French Consul.[9]

In order to understand clearly the troubles that followed upon this marriage, it is necessary that the circumstances under which it was contracted should be noticed:

[9] 'Mémoires du Roi Jérôme,' t. i., p. 242.

1. Jerôme Bonaparte was not yet nineteen, and even had he been one-and-twenty he could not have married without the consent of his mother.

2. Jerôme was warned officially by the Consul that his marriage, if accomplished, would be null and void in the eyes of French law.

3. The French Consul also warned Mr. Paterson of the absolute nullity of the marriage his daughter was about to make. The clauses of the law were signified to him.[10]

Although it is not difficult to understand why Jerôme was anxious, even in spite of the law, to marry the girl whom he loved, it is more difficult, at first sight, to explain the conduct of a father who, after all the circumstances of the case had been clearly put before him, nevertheless, with his eyes open, consented to sacrifice his daughter by allowing this hazardous union. Everything becomes clear, however, when we learn that this father was himself surrounded by the leaders of a sort of political band formed to work, by means of this marriage, upon the First Consul's affection for his brother.

The natural vows and effusions of the young couple were watched carefully by a certain General Smith, a senator, uncle of the bride, and various other members of Congress, in whose

[10] 'Mémoires du Roi Jérôme,' t. i., p. 243.

eyes, as a price of their assistance, the union of the First Consul's brother with one of their compatriots was to be to them a means of political advancement, and the pledge, perhaps, of an alliance between France and the United States. We also find the Marquis d'Yrajo, the Spanish Ambassador, taking an active part in this intrigue,[11] while we cannot discover the motives of this diplomat's action. He undertook to make the proposal to the father, and found the Spanish priest who was to perform the ceremony.[12]

It was quite unnecessary to influence Jerôme; his love took the place of argument and beat down all obstacles. But after the wise cautions of the French Consul, Mr. Paterson, not unnaturally, began to hesitate, and it was then that the circle of politicians undertook to make him see the advantages of the marriage when once accomplished: Jerôme, once married, might, if the worst came to the worst, remain in America, and sooner or later the First Consul, whose feelings they discounted, would make his brother his representative in the United States, at least.[13]

This calculation was not devoid of cleverness,

[11] 'Mémoires du Roi Jérôme,' t. i., p. 243.

[12] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. x., p. 437, No. 8,781, to the Pope, Milan, May 24, 1805.

[13] 'Mémoires du Roi Jérôme,' t. i., pp. 243 *et seq.*

and its realization was not improbable, and as a result of this pressure Mr. Paterson gave his consent. The marriage was celebrated at the house of the bride's father with the utmost secrecy,[14] without any announcement of it by Jerôme to his mother or any member of his family.[15]

Mr. Paterson's heart was not at rest even while he consented to the union. His alarm is clearly revealed by the clauses in the deed of settlement. While their compilation does credit to the practical American common-sense, they betray, most unequivocally, the combination of interests which was the most important factor in this matrimonial scheme.

For the instruction of readers who have pitied the Paterson family for their disappointment, it may be useful to reproduce here the fourth paragraph of the settlements:

'PARAGRAPH 4.—In the case in which, from whatever cause arising, whether from that of the said Jerôme Bonaparte, or *of any one of his relations*, a separation should be applied for between the said Jerôme Bonaparte and Elizabeth Paterson, a separation *a vinculo*, or *a mensâ et thoro*, or in any other manner whatsoever,

[14] 'Mémoires du Roi Jérôme,' t. i., p. 259, letter from Admiral Willaumez to Decrès, January 18, 1804.

[15] *Ibid.*, t. i., p. 253.

which God forbid, the said Elizabeth Paterson shall have a right to, and full and entire enjoyment of, one-third of all the real, personal and mixed estate of the said Jerôme Bonaparte, present and to come, for herself, her heirs, executors, administrators,' etc.[16]

The Patersons embarked upon this conjugal adventure of their own will, and after due consideration of all possible eventualities, especially that of the awkward intervention of *one of the relations* of Jerôme. Is it not clear that a father, really anxious for the future of his daughter and the peace of his family, ought to have begun by requiring the consent of this *someone* whose opposition was foreseen? But they would not risk this step. Having before them a youth of nineteen, madly in love, ready to sign anything and everything put before him, it was considered wise and clever to conclude the marriage, which seemed likely in any case to turn out a good bargain, seeing the financial reservations with which it was hedged round.

Now that we know the real state of the case, we can understand the conduct of Napoleon towards Jerôme in connection with his romantic marriage. It seems clearly proved that the Patersons took advantage of this boy of nineteen, who was desperately in love; what, there-

16 'Mémoires du Roi Jérôme,' t. i., p. 252.

fore, were the rights and the duties of his elder brother, who stood to him in the position of a father? His rights undoubtedly permitted him to receive whom he pleased into his house. Not having been consulted, he was perfectly at liberty to refuse to receive his American sister-in-law. His duty was to make his brother clearly understand the falsity of his position, and to prove to him that his marriage with Miss Paterson was merely a speculation based upon the cupidity of some and the intrigues of others.

Will anyone reproach Napoleon with not having been ready to meet in full the letters of credit drawn upon him under cover of a young man's passion? Was he to ratify, without inquiry, a marriage concluded in contempt of civil laws and moral conventionalities? Hereditary Sovereign, as he soon afterwards became, did it not belong to him, according to monarchical custom, to judge what degree of rank was indispensable to the line of succession in his family? Had he not sufficient weight to impress upon all, beginning with his own family, the respect for public laws which impose upon minors strict obligations towards their parents?

In whatever light it be regarded, no one can pretend that the Emperor exceeded his rights in refusing to recognize this marriage.

Napoleon waited patiently until Jerôme, dis-

abused at last, consented to remember what he owed to his family, and perceived that he had something to do in life besides profiting idly by the position of an elder brother who would not acknowledge him.

On April 28, 1805, Jerôme returned to Europe,[17] with the intention of imploring pardon. He left his young wife at Lisbon, and went himself to Italy, where Napoleon was at the time. To the first overtures made to him, the Emperor replied :

'My brother, your letter received this morning tells me of your arrival at Alessandria. There is no fault that cannot be effaced, in my eyes, by true repentance. Your union with Miss Paterson is null in the eyes of religion and of the law. Write to her to return to America. I will give her for life a pension of sixty thousand francs (£2,400), on condition that, under no circumstances, shall she bear my name, to which she ha no right, owing to the invalidity of your union Explain to her yourself that you have not been able, nor ever will be able, to change the condition of affairs. When, of your own will, you have thus annulled your marriage, I will restore to you my friendship, and will accord to you again the affection I have felt for you since your childhood, hoping that you will render yourself worthy of it

[17] 'Mémoires du Roi Jérôme,' t. i., p. 167.

by the care you will take to secure my gratitude and to distinguish yourself in my armies.'[18]

The conjuncture foreseen in the Baltimore marriage settlement had arisen; *someone* among Jerôme's relations was bent upon the separation of the young couple, and this *someone*, no less positive in business matters than the authors of the settlement, liquidated the situation by a downright offer of an annual sum of 60,000 francs.

Much has been said respecting Napoleon's tyranny in imposing his will upon his brothers Lucien and Jerôme with regard to their choice of wives. If it be tyrannical not to summon to a share in your good-fortune those who despise your advice and fail in every propriety, if it be tyrannical not to give princely prerogatives which you have in your power to those who refuse to deserve your favour, then assuredly Napoleon behaved like a tyrant towards Lucien for ten years, and towards Jerôme until he came to a better state of feeling.

In reality an attempt has been made to deny to the Emperor, head of his family and chief of the State, the rights granted to private individuals; for nobody will pretend that, had Jerôme's father lived, he would not have tried to break off a

[18] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. x., p. 388, No. 8,691, to Jerôme, at Alessandria, May 6, 1805.

marriage concluded under the conditions related above.

The task of justifying Napoleon's arbitrary proceeding is rendered very much easier by the fact that Jerôme, once in Europe, and enlightened as to the financial and political combinations of which his love had been the pivot in America, yielded with docility to the wise advice given him by his family. He offered no resistance, submitted to all that was required of him, and renounced his young wife, whom probably he no longer loved sufficiently to sacrifice for her sake the titles, honours, and certain fortune that he saw before him. Why should we cling more tightly to the bonds that fastened Jerôme to Miss Paterson than he clung to them himself?

The young American accepted the proffered pension, which was paid to her regularly till 1815, and Jerôme Bonaparte regained his liberty.

From that moment Napoleon joyfully announced to all the family the happy change that had come over Jerôme. To his sister Eliza he wrote:

'Jerôme is here; I am satisfied with what he says. Make him understand clearly the necessity of keeping his promises, for it is upon that condition alone that I have restored to him my friendship.'[19]

[19] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. x., p. 389, No. 8,692 to Princess Eliza, May 6, 1805.

To Admiral Decrès he says :

'Monsieur Jerôme has arrived ; Miss Paterson has returned to America. He has recognized his mistake, and renounces this person as his wife. He promises to do wonders.'[20]

To Murat :

'I have good reason to be pleased with Jerôme's promises, if they be sincere and genuine, which I must not doubt.'[21]

For greater security, Napoleon desired Cambacérès to annul by ecclesiastical authority the form of marriage that had been celebrated at Baltimore, and this is how he laid the case before him :

'Married abroad, his contract inscribed upon no register, a minor, without publication of banns, there was no more real marriage than there would be between two lovers who marry in a garden on the altar of love, in the presence of the moon and stars. They call themselves married, but when love departs they discover that they are not.'[22]

From the day upon which Jerôme accepted the annulment of his marriage, Napoleon, faithful to his promises, reinstated him in the navy, and gave

[20] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. x., p. 409, No. 8,732, May 13, 1805.

[21] *Ibid.*, t. x., p. 424, No. 8,754, May 19, 1805.

[22] *Ibid.*, t. x., p. 402, No. 8,720, to Cambacérès, May 13, 1805.

him command of the frigate *Pomone*. He again adopted towards him the paternal attitude which displays itself touchingly in his instructions to Berthier :

'My cousin, desire Monsieur Jerôme to study the cannon exercise carefully, because I shall make him take command of it some day. Let him learn by name all the different pieces that make up a cannon, the name of every portion of his frigate, their dimensions, and all the details of anchorage. Tell him that, as all these details are familiar to me, I shall most likely examine him some day in presence of his crew, and that he must therefore study carefully all that he ought to know. Tell him further that a young man need not blush at asking questions of an old sailor ; that, on the contrary, it does him honour. You will tell him that I put 20,000 francs (£800) at his disposal to dress his boat's crew and some of his men, and that I also give him 12,000 francs (£480) to furnish his room suitably.'[23]

The Emperor thus recommended his brother to the Minister of Marine:

'Monsieur Jerôme is at sea on board his frigate. He possesses quickness, character, decision, and sufficient general knowledge of his

[23] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. x., p. 422, No. 8,752, to Marshal Berthier, May 18, 1805.

profession to enable him to make use of the talents of others.'[24]

The most flattering encouragements soon reached Jerôme. Here is the letter in which, on June 2, 1805, Napoleon announced to him his appointment to the rank of Post-captain :

'My brother, I have appointed you Post-captain. This proof of confidence will encourage you to make your career illustrious, and to justify the great hopes the nation entertains of you. Do not trust to the name you bear ; it is glorious to owe nothing except to one's own merits. With your good disposition, your character, and greater knowledge of your profession, what good might you not have done had you commanded the squadron of Rear-Admiral Missiessy ! I became what I am by will, determination, study, and pluck.'[25]

We can hardly lay sufficient stress upon the perseverance with which Napoleon combats the tendency of his brothers to be intoxicated with their relationship to the Emperor, and how persistently he requires them to walk in his steps along the road of hard work, tenacity, and personal effort.

While in the navy Jerôme's conduct was satis-

[24] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. x., p. 454, No. 8,808, to Admiral Decrès, May 29, 1805.

[25] *Ibid.*, t. x., p. 474, June 2, 1805.

factory. He gave one great proof of skill on board the *Vétéran*, which he brought in safety into the Bay of Concarneau, after having escaped the English by some bold manœuvres.

The Emperor, inclined by nature to exaggerate to himself the value of those he loved, immediately restored Jerôme to his position as a French Prince. By a decree of September 24, 1806, he was declared Prince, and called to the ultimate succession to the throne; he, moreover, received the grand cordon of the Legion of Honour. Finally, to bring his brother nearer to himself, by allowing him to take part in Continental warfare, where opportunities of distinguishing himself were more frequent than in maritime expeditions, the Emperor appointed him General of Brigade, and gave him command of a corps composed of Bavarians and Wurtembergers.[26]

Jerôme did nothing especial at the head of these troops. He did not even seek opportunities of distinguishing himself—at least, such was the opinion of Napoleon expressed in a letter of April 24, 1807:

'I am watching your operations; success is nothing, but I do not see that you are trying to make the most of your chances. Why do not Hédouville and Deroy tell you so? Simply because everyone likes to flatter a prince, and

[26] 'Mémoires du Roi Jérôme,' t. ii., p. 10.

because everyone likes to remain comfortably in a town. But you will never gain experience by those means. What a lesson you lost in the fight at Frankenstein! War can only be learned by facing fire.'[27]

So pleased was Napoleon with Jerôme's submission, that, without being checked by the small eagerness displayed by Jerôme in following his advice, he took a delight in showering favours upon the Benjamin of the family.

By the treaty of Tilsit, July 7, 1807, the Emperor caused Jerôme to be recognized by Europe as Sovereign of the new kingdom of Westphalia, created expressly for him. That was not all. At the end of 1806, in view of an alliance in conformity with this elevation, Napoleon had negotiated for the marriage of his brother with Princess Catherine, daughter of the King of Wurtemberg.

'It was in 1806,' says the Princess in her journal, 'that the King my father first mentioned to me the overtures that had been made to him by France for my marriage with Prince Jerôme.'[28]

On his return to Paris, July 27, 1807, Napoleon

[27] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xv., p. 145, No. 12,465, April 24, 1807.

[28] Journal of Queen Catherine, 'Mémoires du Roi Jérôme,' t. iii., p. 33.

gave Jerôme the *Pavillon de Flore* as his residence, and constituted the new King's civil and military Household.[29]

On August 5 Marshal Bessières started for Stuttgard bearing two letters from the Emperor —one for the King of Wurtemberg, the other for the Princess. The former of these letters contained the official proposal of marriage; the latter ended with these words:

'You can believe that my most earnest care will be to contribute to your happiness, and that I shall always entertain for you the affection and the feelings that you deserve, loving you, as I do, as my own daughter.'[30]

These were not empty words, dictated by the circumstances. What Napoleon said he meant, and he never betrayed the promise given to his future sister-in-law. In her correspondence with her father, the Princess tells of the delicate and affectionate behaviour of the Emperor towards her. Relating in detail the episode of her arrival at the Tuileries, she writes:

'The whole Court met me at the foot of the staircase, the Emperor and the Princesses in the

[29] Journal of Queen Catherine, 'Mémoires du Roi Jérôme,' t. iii., 6.

[30] 'Briefwechsel der Königin Katharina sowie des Kaisers Napoleon I. mit dem König Friedrich von Württemberg,' t. i., p. 28.

first room. I threw myself at his feet; he raised me most graciously, and embraced me tenderly. Then he led me through the apartments and into the Empress's drawing-room, where she was sitting with Madame, mother of the Emperor, the Queen of Naples, the Grand Duchess of Berg, and Princess Stéphanie.

'The Emperor presented me to all the Princesses, and then led me into his apartments, where dinner was served. He talked to me a great deal, and obliged me to drink a little wine —to give me courage, as he said. It is true that I needed some, though I was less shy and less embarrassed with the Emperor than with the Prince. After dinner the Emperor went into his drawing-room, where we remained for a good hour. He talked to the Princes and Princesses, but was especially pleasant, affectionate, and kind to me. He kissed me several times, each time saying the most charming things to me. Amongst others, he said:

'"I love you like my daughter; I know what it has cost you to separate from your father; I wish, if it be possible, to drive away all recollection of those painful moments. Your father is my friend, and I shall never forget the mark of confidence he has shown me in uniting your lot to that of my brother."

'I should never have believed the Emperor

capable of displaying so much friendship towards anyone.'[31]

Not content with giving the Princess such lively marks of interest, Napoleon writes to the King of Wurtemberg, whom he supposes to be uneasy respecting his daughter :

'Your Majesty can rest assured of the sentiments I entertain towards your daughter. I know how much, at such a time as this, and in a strange country, the Princess must miss the care and friendliness that surrounded her at Stuttgard.'

In this anxiety, sincere though it be, one cannot help noticing the anxiety of the *parvenu* soldier to show himself worthy of a royal alliance, and to reassure the King upon the customs of the Imperial Court, in which his daughter was to live, and which had been so frequently decried. It is strange to find this letter terminating by details about the existing heat, which contain nothing majestic, but which seem to have been put in on purpose to show that henceforward the correspondence was to become intimate :

'I hope that your Majesty keeps well in this horrible heat. We have not had anything like it here for sixty years. For my own part, though my memory does not go back so far as

[31] 'Briefwechsel der Königin Katharina,' etc., t. i., p. 42, Paris, August 22, 1807.

that, I do not remember ever having been so hot in France.'[32]

The Emperor's kindness to Queen Catherine is mentioned in each of her letters. From the extracts we shall reproduce here, it will be seen that it was impossible to be more tender, more simple, more *bourgeois* (the only word that expresses Napoleon), more naturally affectionate than the Emperor was to his sister-in-law.

'Just as I had closed my letter,' says Queen Catherine to her father, 'the Emperor and Empress came to ask how I was. The Emperor talked a great deal to me about many subjects, into which I cannot enter here, as they would be too long; he insisted upon the Empress going in search of the jewel-case containing his present to me, and which I am not to have till the evening following the civil marriage. It would be impossible to find anything more beautiful of its kind. He himself took off my cap in order to try on the diadem, the comb, and the ear-rings, and my necklace in order to put on me that of diamonds. It would be impossible to imagine greater kindness or affection than the Emperor always shows me; he is so thoughtful for me, and always calls me "Papa's darling child."'[33]

[32] 'Briefwechsel der Königin Katharina,' etc., t. i., p. 44, August 22, 1807.

[33] *Ibid.*, t. i., p. 44, August 22, 1807.

'I cannot, my dearest father, repeat to you often enough how much kindness is shown to me here, and in what a delightful manner the Emperor and Empress are good enough to treat me. I can assure you that I am, as at home, the spoiled child of the house.'[34]

'My dearest father, for the last three days I have not been quite well. I hasten to write to reassure you. Although I had a slight attack of fever, it was absolutely nothing but a little cold. I cannot be sufficiently grateful for the kindness shown to me by the Emperor and Empress.'[35]

'The King (Jerôme) has been away since Sunday last. The Emperor laughs a great deal at my sadness, but has loaded me with kindness since Jerôme went away. He makes me dine with him every day, and the Empress wishes me to breakfast with her every morning. It would be impossible to display greater kindness to their own daughter than they do to me.'[36]

It is unnecessary to multiply these quotations. If they be compared with those we have given relating to the household of Prince Eugène, it will be seen that there is nothing special or exceptional in this case, but that Napoleon's manner

[34] 'Briefwechsel der Königin Katharina,' etc., t. i., p. 64, September 22, 1807.

[35] *Ibid.*, t. i., p. 69, Fontainebleau, September 25, 1807.

[36] *Ibid.*, t. i., p. 89, November 10, 1807.

was always cordial and frank to all the members of his family, whteher old or new.

He watched over Queen Catherine with constant solicitude, and of this we have an indubitable proof in a letter written in 1814 by the King of Wurtemberg to his daughter :

'I know that had Jerôme only been concerned, he would have divorced you! It is only to Napoleon, when at Dresden last summer, that you owe the continuance of your existence as a wife.'[37]

The reign of Jerôme Bonaparte in Westphalia was to Napoleon a source of constant annoyance, all arising from the thoughtless conduct of his brother, from the recklessness with which he managed the finances of his kingdom, and from the magnificence, at least equal to that of France, that he insisted on maintaining at Cassel, his capital, in spite of the exiguity of his budget.

From the pen of Jerôme and his ministers we can trace, in a few lines selected from this correspondence, a clear and conclusive picture of the deplorable financial position of Westphalia.

'I must go straight to the point (*Je ne puis prendre de biais*) with your Majesty,' wrote the King to the Emperor in 1809, 'and cannot deceive you in a matter so important, but it is

[37] 'Briefwechsel,' etc., t. ii., p. 113, King Frederic to Queen Catherine, Stuttgard, April 20, 1814.

certain that the kingdom of Westphalia cannot hold out for six months longer in the present condition of its finances.'[38]

A few months later he writes an even more pressing letter:

'Want has reached such a pitch throughout the kingdom (as nobody can be paid) that if your Majesty does not come to our help we cannot go on for another two months.'[39]

There is no improvement in 1811:

'Will your Majesty put yourself for an instant in my place, Sovereign of a ruined country, weighed down under the burden of enormous charges?'[40]

Reinhard, the representative of the Emperor at Cassel, is not more optimist: he declares that 'the deficit for the year 1811 is at least 14,000,000 francs (£520,000).'[41]

People have accepted Jerôme's lamentations as unvarnished statements, and have reproached the Emperor with selfishness. It has been imputed to him as a crime that he left his brother in so precarious a position. But his difficulties really arose from his own luxurious extravagance. The

[38] Letter from Jerôme to Napoleon, Cassel, February 3, 1809; Baron du Casse, 'Les Rois Frères de Napoléon,' p. 232.

[39] *Ibid.*, September 20, 1809; *ibid.*, p. 312.

[40] *Ibid.*, February 17, 1811; *ibid.*, p. 366.

[41] Letter from Reinhard to Champagny, April 13, 1811; *Ibid.*, p. 381.

question the Emperor had to decide was whether the revenues of France were intended to pay for the follies of a Prince who, in this little kingdom, seemed possessed with a mania for grandeur, and persisted, notwithstanding his royal misery, in leading a life of debauchery that might have roused an Eastern Sultan to envy.

For this tiny Court, the King could not be satisfied with less than 'one grand marshal of the palace, two prefects of the palace, one great chamberlain, fifteen ordinary chamberlains, one principal master of the ceremonies, eight masters of ceremonies, more than twenty aides-de-camp, one equerry in chief, six equerries, one principal chaplain, chaplains and almoners in great number, three secretaries, etc.'[42]

The Queen's Household was organized on the same scale.

This large number of courtiers, all drawing large salaries, ate into and drained the poor little budget of Westphalia.

A French theatre was indispensable to the happiness of the Court; this whim cost the civil list no less than 400,000 francs annually (£16,000).[43]

'When the King of Westphalia travelled

[42] Baron du Casse, p. 220.

[43] Letter from Reinhard to the Duke of Bassano, May 19, 1812; Du Casse, p. 406.

through his dominions,' says Blangini, 'the artistes from the royal theatre, his private band and his orchestra nearly always accompanied him.'[44]

A whirlwind of folly seemed to carry the King and his Court into a perfect vortex of gaieties, as futile as they were expensive. On one occasion a garden-party was organized at which 'the King and Queen, on their arrival, were received by shepherds and shepherdesses, bearing garlands with which they formed a trellis over the heads of their Majesties. The ball was opened with a Spanish quadrille. A fair had been arranged, and at a dozen stalls ladies distributed presents, the Queen giving jewels which she took from a casket. The French Minister entered at the head of a band of masquers representing an Egyptian Bey with his harem.'[45]

Previously, at another fancy ball, 'The Queen danced in a quadrille formed of all the persons of her Household. The King enjoyed himself very much, and changed his costume several times.'[46]

Evidently they did enjoy themselves vastly at Cassel. No fault can be found with either the

[44] 'Souvenirs de F. Blangini,' p. 200.

[45] Reinhard to the Duke of Bassano, February 16, 1807; *ibid.*, p. 231.

[46] *Ibid.*, February 5, 1809; Du Casse, p. 229.

splendour or variety of the entertainments, which would have exhausted the resources of a satrap. An evening of which Reinhard gives an account in his letter of February 12, 1810, is worth recording:

'The ball last night at the palace was extremely brilliant. The Court appeared first in the guise of a pack of piquet cards, a masquerade more learned than witty; but soon there appeared out of this fantastic crowd a beautifully ordered series of dancing rivers and towns. The King of Clubs turned into the Weser River, and the towns of Hammeln and Hanover fraternized with Brunswick and Magdeburg. A picked number of the ladies of the Court, changing their costumes for the third time, reappeared as Egyptians and formed a quadrille with the King.'[47]

If, after reading the urgent entreaties for help addressed by Jerôme to the Emperor, one is inclined to picture to one's self a King moody, wretched, in despair at his melancholy plight, one will soon be undeceived and consoled by reading that 'the Court appeared at a ball in a masquerade representing the marriage of Figaro. The King, as Figaro, performed, to the sound of castanets, a Spanish dance with Madame de Boucheporn (a very pretty person, wife of one of

[47] Reinhard to the Duke of Bassano, February 12, 1810; Du Casse, p. 339.

the prefects of the palace), and distributed flowers.'[48]

In presence of this disorderly conduct, can we blame Napoleon for not paying attention to his brother's grievances? The Emperor, we may be sure, ignored nothing that was going on at Cassel. He read the diplomatic bulletins that we have transcribed, and was perfectly alive to the sumptuous amusements, and even to the dissolute manners, of the Court of Westphalia.

He knew that the 'mothers of Cassel who have pretty daughters are afraid to let them go to the Court balls and parties';[49] that in the invitations to Napoleonshöhe, the summer residence, where the costume required consisted of a little blue tunic, embroidered in silver, blue breeches and top-boots, 'women and their husbands were rarely mentioned together.'[50] He also knew that 'the wives of officials and generals made no secret whatever of receiving royal presents, such as diamond necklaces.'[51]

Finally, the Emperor knew that, for a whim worthy of Crœsus or the Marquis of Carabas, 'the King having gone to luncheon at a country

[48] Reinhard, February 23, 1810; Du Casse, p. 341.

[49] Report from Monsieur Jollivet to the Emperor, December 8, 1807; *ibid.*, p. 209.

[50] Reinhard, May 20, 1813; *ibid.*, p. 452.

[51] *Ibid.*, February 23, 1810; *ibid.*, p. 341.

house belonging to the banker, Jordis, said to the gardener on leaving: "This house belongs to me," and paid 30,000 thalers (£4,500) for a villa that had cost 7,000 (£1,050).'[52]

From these characteristic traits, taken at haphazard from the letters of eye-witnesses, who described this extravagant and luxurious existence, we can gain some idea of the exasperation of the Emperor, who was, as a rule, so indignant at waste of money. As he did not consider that the Treasury of France should pay for these princely orgies, he turned a deaf ear to the supplications of Jerôme, who woke the echoes with lamentations upon his wretched resources. Upon these complaints, regarded without any examination into their real causes, have been founded the accusations against the Emperor of unkindness and hardness of heart.

In 1807 the Emperor writes:

'From one of your letters of the 8th, I see that you do not expect to be able to meet your engagement to pay the money you have borrowed from the sinking-fund. I cannot understand that. It would be a bad beginning of your Government, and a bad security for your credit, if you start by not paying your debts.'[53]

[52] Reinhard, August 10, 1809; Du Casse, p. 304.

[53] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xvi., p. 200, No. 13,404, December 17, 1807.

Here is his answer to a prayer for money in 1809:

'Your entreaty for money is indiscreet at a moment when I do not know how to meet the immense expenses that I have, since my armies in Spain cost me money and bring in no return, and my other armies have to be kept up as well. Do away with half your luxury, save a portion of your civil list in order to increase your military force.'[54]

A few days later the Emperor repeats:

'As to the state of your treasury and your administration, it does not concern me. I know that both are in a very bad condition. It is the result of the way you live and of the luxury that reigns in your house. All your actions bear the stamp of carelessness. Why display a luxury so little in harmony with the country, and which, of itself, must be a calamity to Westphalia?'[55]

The following year brings the same reproaches:

'I hear on all sides that your troops are not paid and that they are in a miserable condition. However, I have written so much and so frequently to you upon the subject, that you must know it as well as I do. I can only repeat to you

[54] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xviii., p. 256, No. 14,764, February 7, 1809.

[55] Letter from Napoleon to Jerôme, February 11, 1809; Baron du Casse, 'Les Rois Frères,' etc., p. 232.

that the promises you made me ought to be kept, and that they are not.'[56]

Even supposing, what is highly probable, that filial care has eliminated from the 'Correspondence of Napoleon' the most violent scoldings, and the most selfish letters of the Emperor to King Jerôme, we willingly admit—nay, we regard it as certain—that the King of Westphalia was taken to task, on many occasions, in terms that must have been most disagreeable to him. Even so there was no ground for complaint, especially if we consider the harm that Jerôme was so gaily doing at Cassel.

King Jerôme was, by nature, charming, and he always tried to appease the Emperor by assurances of the utmost devotion.

'I never take a step,' he wrote, 'without having your Majesty before my eyes, without desiring to please you, and especially without having as my ambition that you may say: "My brother Jerôme has never caused me any trouble."'[57]

Could anything be more charming? The worst of it was that, immediately after making these epistolary demonstrations, Jerôme recommenced his extravagances.

[56] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xxi., p. 267, No. 17,120, November 8, 1810.

[57] Letter from Jerôme to Napoléon, February 17, 1812; Du Casse, p. 366.

Jerôme, by his recklessness, had gravely compromised his position in Westphalia long before the fall of the Empire.

In vain do we seek any proof of real severity on the part of the Emperor which might have been salutary to Jerôme. On the contrary, though Napoleon opposed a certain resistance to the most extravagant demands of his brother, he always ended by yielding to his reiterated entreaties. One example will suffice to show the habitual weakness of the Emperor.

One of Jerôme's first acts after his accession was to create his first Chamberlain, one Le Camus, Count of Fürstenstein. This man's principal claims to this honour were, if chroniclers speak truly, that he had always shown himself an obliging servant, and was always ready to assist the amorous caprices of his young master. He had long been Jerôme's factotum.

At Cassel, we find him retaining in the town a lady's-maid whom the Queen had dismissed in order to remove her from the attentions of the King. At the same time an actress from Breslau was attracted to Cassel by Monsieur Le Camus, acting upon orders from his master.[58]

The title of Count appeared to Jerôme an insufficient recompense for the eminent services of

[58] Note from Monsieur Jollivet to the Emperor, December, 1807; Du Casse, p. 208.

this faithful Chamberlain. He proposed to have him appointed *Grand Aigle* of the Legion of Honour.

The Emperor, who was most careful not to lavish the decoration, shrugged his shoulders when he heard of this incongruous request.

'With his usual violence of temper, he, of course, accompanied his peremptory refusal with a violent and cruel outburst.' Well, with all respect to his malevolent biographers, this circumstance will be another proof of the conciliatory disposition of the Emperor. Not only is he careful not to lay down his opinion (just as it might be) with roughness, but he even takes the trouble to discuss the matter with the King in order to induce him, of his own free will, to give up so scandalous a proposition.

'When you ask me,' he writes, 'to give the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour to the Count of ——, I can only leave you to judge whether it be suitable or not. Your mind is too well balanced to think that it is. Cretet, Minister of the Interior, who has rendered me such services; Mollien, Minister of the Public Treasury, one of the best financiers in Europe; Clarke, Minister of War, who has been Governor of Vienna and Berlin; Bigot de Préameneu, Minister of Worship, who has been President of the Section of Legislation in my Council of State; Lacuée,

Régnaud, Dufermon, all Ministers of State, who have done much for me—none of these have the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour. I say nothing about the Generals. Except the Marshals, there are but a few who received it for their conduct at Austerlitz and Friedland. I await your answer.'[59]

Jerôme held to his point, and made very light of Napoleon's clearly-expressed objection to realize his desire. He actually returned to the charge, arguing that by his title of Count of Fürstenstein Monsieur Le Camus had become a foreigner. He pointed out that in that capacity, by a subtle distinction, his Chamberlain might receive this great favour without wounding the susceptibilities of Frenchmen more deserving in every respect.

The King insisted to such an extent that Napoleon, whose weakness towards his brothers was boundless, finished by signing the decree nominating the precious Chamberlain *Grand Aigle* of the Legion of Honour.

However painful Jerôme's lapses of conduct may have been to Napoleon, they never passed between them beyond the stage of family quarrels. They were not injurious to Napoleon, as were the acts of his other brothers. Jerôme, in conclusion, caused grievous pain to the Emperor, but he is

[59] 'Correspondence of Napoleon I.,' t. xviii., p. 11, No. 14,397, October 23, 1808.

the only member of the family who can lay claim to the honour of not having contributed directly to the fall of the Empire. On the contrary, we find him, up to the last moment, doing his duty to the utmost. In Russia, at Waterloo, where he was wounded in the hottest of the fight,[60] everywhere, he took a courageous part in the desperate efforts of the Emperor's most faithful companions.

Napoleon, forgetful of Jerôme's former misdemeanours, did him full justice when he said of him at St. Helena:

'Jerôme, as he grew older, would have made a good governor; I had real hopes of him.'[61]

The Emperor was no less loud in his praise of Jerôme's wife, whose irreproachable conduct he proclaimed aloud at the time when by every means she was being tortured by her father, who wished to compel her to apply for a divorce in 1814, after the fall of the Imperial power.

This noble Queen answered with an exclamation of rebellion which is admirable in its eloquence. She may serve as a model to all princesses who, for reasons of State or for other reasons, think it their duty to sacrifice themselves. What enhances the Queen's merits is that she had abundant reasons for leaving her husband.

'My previous letters,' she writes, 'must have

60 Fleury de Chaboulon, 'Mémoires,' t. ii., p. 116.

61 Las Cases, 'Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène,' t. vii., p. 100.

proved to you what are my irrevocable intentions. Whatever, my dear father, my love and submission to you may have been all through my life, you cannot blame me if in so important a matter I find myself obliged only to hearken to the dictates of duty and honour. United to my husband by bonds originally formed by policy, I will not recall here the happiness I have had with him during seven years; but had he been the worst of husbands to me, if you, my father, will only consult what the truest principles point out to me, you, I am certain, will tell me that I cannot abandon him when he is in trouble, especially when that trouble is not of his own making.'[62]

Napoleon might well say of her:

'That Princess wrote her name in history with her own hand.'[63]

These words are an everlasting honour to Catherine of Wurtemberg, while they are an ineradicable stigma upon the conduct of Maria-Louisa of Austria.

[62] 'Briefwechsel der Königin Katharina mit dem König Friedrich von Württemberg,' t. ii., p. 109, April 17, 1814.

[63] Las Cases, 'Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène,' t. iii., p. 170.

APPENDIX.

SOME PERSONAL TRAITS OF CHARACTER OF NAPOLEON.

'NAPOLEON took the greatest pains in the formation of his Council, as it afforded him the only check on the errors of his Ministers—in fact, it formed the only body whose concurrence really lent to his acts the countenance of public opinion. He called to his assistance, accordingly, all the best qualified persons he could find in every department of government, and wherever he could lay his hands upon them. In this manner Merlin and Portalis were selected to assist in the business of legislation, Fourcroy and Chaptal in science, Fleurien in naval affairs, and Gouvion Saint-Cyr in those relating to military matters. To the names already given may be added those of the Count Pelet de la Lozère, Count de Ségur, M. Daru, M. Monnier, of the Assemblée Constituante, etc. Besides these, there were many others whose names are well known to the world. The list will be found, with its various changes, in the "Almanach Impérial" for the different years of Napoleon's reign. Having formed his Council, he divided it into Sections, to each of which he referred the various projects

proposed to him by his Ministers to be separately considered. The same matters were afterwards discussed by the assembled Council, and generally in his presence.

'The moment a new province was added to the Empire, Napoleon sought out the cleverest men with whom to enrich his Council. For example, Genoa supplied him with Corvetto, who became afterwards one of the Ministers of Louis XVIII. Corsini came from Florence, Saint-Marsan from Turin, and Appélius from Holland. All these were men so remarkable for talents that after the downfall of the Empire and on their return home, they were appointed to high stations by their own sovereigns, in spite of any prejudices which their having served in France might have created against them.'—*Pelet de la Lozère*, '*Napoleon in Council*,' pp. 5, 6.

'The restless activity which Napoleon exhibited in his own person he exacted from all those whom he called to his aid. As he complained not infrequently that the Council did not advance rapidly enough with business, it was incumbent upon everyone to show that he was not behindhand with his task. When a report was to be drawn up, it was ordered for next day; or if one of his Council was charged with the duty of proposing a law to the Legislative Body, he had often not a couple of hours to prepare the whole matter, besides getting his speech ready.

'Such scrimp time, however, was quite enough for Napoleon himself, for he dictated with such rapidity that there generally remained several pages of matter to be written after he had done speaking; and yet on the revision it was seldom that anything was found requiring alteration.

'Both before and after these meetings of the Council of State, Napoleon frequently presided at other councils, where, in concert with certain professional men (*hommes spéciaux*), the details of each department of the administration, such as that of the Public Works, the War Office, and so on, were discussed, his mind passing with wonderful facility from one topic to another. Thus we know that on the eve of the battle of Austerlitz he assembled his Generals at six o'clock in the afternoon to give his orders for the next day's fight, and immediately afterwards proceeded to consider the organization of the scholastic establishment at Saint Denis, which done, he recurred to the preparations for the battle.'—*Pelet de la Lozère*, '*Napoleon in Council*,' pp. 14, 15.

'At one time the institution of Trial by Jury ran a great risk of being entirely suppressed. It was attacked by Napoleon, but defended by various members of the Council. Treillard was the person who stood up most boldly against the Emperor.

'"It must be owned," said he, "that you are very obstinate."

'To which the other replied:

'"Your Majesty is not a whit less tenacious of your opinion than I am."

'In the end the question was put to the vote, and ten of the members voted with their master—that is, for the suppression of the trial by jury. Fourteen, however, voted for the jury, and it was maintained accordingly.'—*Pelet de la Lozère*, '*Napoleon in Council*,' p. 88.

'One of Bonaparte's greatest misfortunes was that he neither believed in friendship nor felt the necessity of loving. How often have I heard him say:

'"Friendship is but a name; I love nobody. I do not even love my brothers. Perhaps Joseph a little from habit, and because he is my elder. And Duroc, I love him too, but why? Because his character pleases me. He is stern and resolute, and I really believe the fellow never shed a tear. For my part, I know very well that I have no true friends. . . . Leave sensibility to women; it is their business. But men should be firm in heart and in purpose, or they should have nothing to do with war or government.'—*Bourrienne's* '*Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte*,' 1885 edition, vol. i., p. 285.

'On one occasion the Emperor called up M. Daru, then Secretary of State, after midnight, to write to his dictation. M. Daru was so completely overcome by fatigue that he scarcely knew what he was writing. At length he could hold out no longer, and fell asleep over his paper. After enjoying a sound nap he awoke, and, to his astonishment, perceived the Emperor by his side quietly engaged in writing. The shortness of the candles informed him that his slumber had been of tolerable duration. While he sat for a few moments overwhelmed with confusion, his eyes met those of the Emperor, who said to him:

'"Well, sir, you see I have been doing your work, since you would not do it yourself. I suppose you have eaten a hearty supper, and passed a pleasant evening; but business must not be neglected."

'"*I* pass a pleasant evening, Sire!" said M. Daru. "I have been for several nights without sleep, and closely engaged. Of this your Majesty now sees the consequence, and I am exceedingly sorry for it."

'"Why did you not inform me of this?" said the Emperor. "I do not want to kill you; go to bed. Good-night, M. Daru."'—'*Las Cases*,' English edition, vol. iii., part vi., p. 22.

'The day before the battle of Waterloo Captain Elphinstone had been severely wounded and made prisoner. His situation attracted the personal attention of Napoleon, who immediately ordered his surgeon to dress his wounds, and perceiving that he was faint from loss of blood, sent him a silver goblet full of wine from his own canteen. On the arrival of the *Bellerophon* in England, Lord Keith sent his grateful thanks to Napoleon for having saved his nephew's life.' —*O'Meara's* '*Napoleon at St. Helena*,' 1888 edition, vol. ii., p. 153.

'Napoleon told me that when he was at Boulogne two English sailors arrived there, who made their escape from Verdun, and had passed through the country undiscovered. They had remained there for some time. Having no money, they were at a loss how to effect their escape, and there was such a vigilant watch kept upon the boats that they despaired of being able to seize upon one. They made a sort of vessel of little ribs of wood, which they formed with their knives, living as well as they could upon roots and fruits. This bark of theirs they covered with calico, which they stretched over the ribs. When finished it was not more than about three feet and a half in length, and of proportionate breadth, and so light that one of them carried it on his shoulders. In this machine they determined to attempt their passage to England. Seeing an English frigate approach very near to the shore, they launched their bark, and

attempted to join her; but before they had proceeded very far they were discovered by the *douaniers*, seized, and brought back.

'The story transpired in consequence of the astonishment excited at seeing two men venture out to sea in such a fragile conveyance. Napoleon heard of it, and ordered them with their little boat to be brought before him. He was struck with astonishment at the idea of men trusting their lives to such an article, and asked them if it was possible they could have intended to go to sea in that. They replied that, to convince him, they were ready at that moment to attempt it again in the same vessel. Admiring the boldness of their attempt, and the bluntness of the reply, he ordered that they should be set at liberty, some napoléons given to them, and a conveyance to the English squadron provided for them. Previously to this, they were going to be tried as spies, as several persons had seen them lurking about the camp for some days.'—*O'Meara's* '*Napoleon at St. Helena,*' 1888 edition, vol. ii., p. 172.

END OF VOL. I.

BILLING AND SONS, PRINTERS, GUILDFORD.

J. D. & Co.

